

# Community Video Report

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Office of Telecommunications Policy Director Clay T. Whitehead.

## OTP's Whitehead wants to leave more positive legacy

By Nick DeMartino

Clay T. Whitehead is working hard to leave a legacy.

Not that he hasn't done quite enough in his four years as head of Richard Nixon's Office of Telecommunications Policy to be remembered for some time, thank you. It's just that, well, much of his current legacy is, in his words "unfortunate."

Whitehead is spending an undefined number of final months at OTP cementing policy achievements that he hopes will supplant what the public in general, and media-watchers in specific cannot help but remember him for: together with former Vice President Spiro Agnew, Whitehead led the Nixon Administration's rhetorical charge against the evils of Eastern Establishment Liberal Media.

The day I spoke with Whitehead, he was lit with the glow of victory. That morning's *Washington Post* carried the headline: "Nixon Asks Fund Bill For Public Broadcast," and gave credit to Whitehead for hammering out a compromise on guaranteed, long-range funding that an anti-PBS Nixon would agree to sign.

We talked about public broadcasting and about the project that Whitehead feels is his "swan song, his major achievement"—the Cabinet-Level Report to the President on Cable Communications, released earlier this year, and the resulting legislation for long-range cable TV policy which is currently lodged in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

It was with a few terse verbal pellets that Clay Whitehead shot his way into the history books. "Ideological plugola" made numerous headlines following his use of the phrase in a speech to an Indianapolis audience of journalists.

That was in 1969—another era, almost, when an unknown communications policy bureaucrat could make a name for himself by firing salvos for his boss in the ever-widening war between the media and the Administration.

Several bloody battles and two years of Watergate later, only lingering doubts remain as to who claims victory.

Whitehead has suffered criticism, not just from journalists, broadcasters, public-interest groups and media owners, but also from the Congress, which has gutted OTP's budget.

Of late he has taken to mending his

Congressional fences, with pro-broadcasting heavies like Sen. John Pastore and exchanging mutually admiring remarks at recent hearings on the Administration's license-renewal bill.

As Whitehead tells it, he and the Administration have always been acting in the interests of the broadcaster.

Re: the Indianapolis speech: "I think it was a good speech," he says. "I think it was a moderate speech. The thrust of it was that it the government is to give the broadcaster more freedom in what he programs, which is what we proposed in our license renewal bill, that it carried a moral responsibility on the part of the broadcaster to pay more attention to what the public wants."

"I do regret that the catch phrases in the presence of the charged atmosphere between this Administration and the press caused my basic message to be overlooked," he claims. "It appeared as though what we were doing was threatening the broadcast industry. I think my testimony in favor of the [license-renewal] bill since then shows that is not what we were doing."

(See WHITEHEAD, page 15)

## CVR's new publication policy

*With this issue, Community Video Report begins its second year of publication, having grown quickly from essentially a local newsletter about video and cable television, to a national publication that examines a broad range of communications, technology, and political issues. In this process we have become a bit schizophrenic, wanting to maintain quality coverage at both the regional and national level. In addition, rising costs and the fact that we never break even have forced us to examine the future of the publication and make some changes.*

*The current issue will be the last full issued that will be distributed free in mass to the Washington area. Those of you who have been receiving this publication in the mail for free should take this to heart and mail us a check & subscription form if you wish to continue reading CVR.*

*We are making a concerted effort to get the publication distributed nationally. If you are a video center or bookstore that would be willing to sell CVR on consignment, please write us immediately. We will ship you a bundle, post haste. If you are subscribing now, please renew. If not, please do, for chances are you won't be getting it for free any more.*

*As far as the Washington-Baltimore area goes, we will continue to cover communications news in a regional edition, which we are hoping to provide as a supplement to several community newspapers. This supplement will remain as part of the national publication, for paid subscribers. We hope to provide the full publication for purchase in local newsstands and bookstores in the region as well.*

*We hope our publication provides useful information for you and enough other people to make it pay for itself. We continue to regard it as a publication that is open to the entire communications community, too. Feel free to write us with articles, suggestions, criticisms, and support.*

—The Staff

## CVR editorial

# Why cable franchising ain't what it should be

That few people know very much about cable TV is not surprising. In 1974, cable serves less than 10% of U.S. TV homes, largely by means of traditional reception improvement services. Few viewers have yet seen evidence of the "blue sky" promises heard over the past years.

Among the rest of the population, a healthy, if small, movement has grown up at the grassroots level—as well as among national organizations—of citizens who want to make sure this new technology is developed to its most beneficial social potential and that it doesn't become just another commercial rip-off.

It is this small number of activist citizens who have joined an ever-expanding army of technocrats in seeing cable as the basis for an enormous re-structuring of society. Just as previous technologies like the highway system, television, the telephone, the automobile, the airplane, have altered the fundamental patterns of modern life, so too will this wired-nation concept have profound implications.

Yet the importance of an issue does not assure that either the public or the officials they elect will regard it with appropriate thoughtfulness. This becomes truly problematic when the issue involves technical and economic factors. Combine that with private greed and public officials who are willing to advance private interests, and we have a classic American political mess.

The development of technology in America has been the story of private capital, and, particularly since WWII, it's a story which has increasingly involved the government in both capital investment (particularly in weaponry) and policy decisions.

Cable television, of course, has been no exception. The 1972 FCC cable rules were a blatant exercise in government protection which—to many within the cable industry, anyway—has meant severe limitations in developing the technology at all.

But, unlike computers or nuclear power, cable television has become a technology which can be affected by average people at the local level. The process of franchising the operators of these systems is being done community by community, even if this process is often circumscribed by the heavy hand of federal pre-emption.

This simple fact has made cable perhaps the first significant technology which can be developed with major policy input by the non-technical public.

(See EDITORIAL, page 10)

## Locals may fight WMAL sale

Agreement by the board members to sell controlling interest in *Washington Star* Communications, Inc. to Texas millionaire Joe Allbritton may provide D.C. citizens and community groups with an opportunity to improve media performance in the capital city.

The board's decision to sell 37 percent of the company's stock for \$25 million on July 17 is a major step in transferring control of the family-owned communications group, which includes the *Washington Star-News*, the city's only evening daily, WMAL-TV, AM, and FM, plus the *Star* newspaper syndicate and broadcasting properties in Virginia and South Carolina.

Stockholders must approve the deal in September. In addition, the Federal Communications Commission must approve transfer of all broadcasting outlets, WMAL included.

It is the FCC approval which holds promise for community groups. An FCC rule passed in 1970 prohibits television-radio combines in a single city, although it exempts existing arrangements. Allbritton, however, would be forced to either divest the profitable broadcasting stations or seek a waiver to the FCC rules.

Since the FCC has waived this particular rule often, Allbritton lawyers indicate that they will go the waiver route.

Community groups and residents served by a broadcast station can file a petition before the FCC challenging any such request.

Ordinarily, the only opportunity for community groups to challenge the performance of broadcast stations in hiring, programming, and in other areas would be at the time a station seeks its periodic license renewal. A coalition of groups in D.C. made such a challenge in 1969 against WMAL-TV, but lost on appeal in U.S. District Court.

(See WMAL, page 2)

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# Alaska's Sky River Project

## community use of video and film

By Ray Popkin

The use of video and film as tools for social change has long been exemplified by the work of Challenge for Change, a communications project funded by the National Film Board of Canada.

Tim Kennedy, current Director of Challenge for Change gave a talk in Washington recently at a seminar presented by the Information Center on Instructional Technology. His talk was about the Sky River Project in Alaska and though this particular project was in the United States, funded by O.E.O., it was modeled on the NFB experience. His experiences in Alaska and with NFB in Canada are well worth studying as they shed light on what the video process can be.

Kennedy is a community organizer, not a filmmaker or video person. He worked in an Eskimo village for two-and-a-half years before using video there. All Challenge for Change projects use a community organizer before the video process begins. Media people—no matter how sensitive—have a habit of defining community needs in terms of how these needs can serve the purpose of introducing video into the community. The organizer focuses on whether and how media can fit into the community process. He might decide that the media won't fit into that process at all.

Kennedy points out that the incentive to undertake projects must come from the people in the community.

"First of all I do not believe an organizer should step into undertaking a program. The organizer should only be involved with a community that has made a specific request for assistance. It is one thing to make communities aware that you're available and what you can do, and its another thing to impose your self on the community."

The Skyriver project was centered in Emmonak, a small Eskimo village. For the first year video was used in the community as a feedback tool for the villagers. During this period local people learned to use video and taped each other. These tapes were played at community meetings. The importance of this process was that it brought various factions in the village together. Young people and old people, Yukon people and Tundra people began to meet together to watch the video tapes and discuss the issues presented. The fact that they were reacting to the video tapes on the screen instead of to each other face to face gave people a safe space to operate in. People felt less threatened in reacting to the tapes than they would in reacting directly to each other. Out of this process came a consensus on certain issues.

One the villagers agreed on the important issues and the communications process they wished to use, Kennedy brought in a film crew. Kennedy feels that film is a more powerful medium for displaying the material to people outside the community; much of the material to be used to try to effect change in policy at the state level was recorded on film.

To facilitate the process the village selected their own organizer to work with Kennedy and the film crew. From here on in the whole process was completely controlled by the village. In meetings they voted on the issues they wished to raise and then selected a village spokesman, one whom they respected and felt could best reflect the feelings of the people on that subject. The spokesman decided where and when the film interview would take place and what would come out in it.



Andre Monpetit

In each film the spokesman raises and offers a solution to a particular problem. The film rushes are then under the control of the person filmed. No one else sees them until the spokesman gets to view them and decide if they represent what he or she wanted to say. The editing is done in the presence of the spokesman under his or her control. When the spokesman is satisfied with the film, he or she signs a release allowing it to be shown to the rest of the village, which then discusses the film and decides whether or not it reflects the views of the community. Other members of the village can add to the film at this time if they feel more information is needed. When a consensus is reached the village signs a release for the film to be shown to specific people whom they select.

The film that Kennedy showed to us in Washington was one of the best examples of community process media involvement I have seen. For example: in Alaska most Eskimo teenagers have been sent to the American mainland for high school because there were no highschools in the sparsely populated parts of Alaska. State officials felt that this program was satisfactory to the Eskimos. In the film on this subject the spokesman explained that in fact this was a great hardship on the people, not only because of the separation involved but because the children were needed at home to help. The film also pointed out that the kids forgot the Eskimo culture, while they were away. In addition, it explained the parents' fears about the impact a parent's

death would have on a child away at school. In Eskimo culture it is important that the whole family be present when one member is sick and nearing death so that it can understand what has happened and why.

This film was taken to a meeting with the State Education Commissioner at which other nearby villagers were present. The film not only profoundly affected the officials but also the other villagers. After seeing someone like themselves with the same education and



Illustrations courtesy of Access, Challenge for Change newsletter

and watch all the best shots thrown in the trash, or to have to wait six months for the fishing season to be over before the material can be screened. Often this problem leads to deep conflicts between the crew and the community. A crew must understand that the product is secondary to the process.

In Kennedy's article on this subject in the Challenge For Change newsletter, he discusses the importance of the organizer and crew's attitude toward the community they serve. He



Clark Misher

background on film, the people lined up at the microphone to give support to the views expressed.

The film was then taken to the capital of Alaska and shown to legislators. The village organizer took the video with him and taped the response of these officials to play back in the village.

The villagers learned a new sense of power, because their actions obtained results. Emmonak now has its own regional high school and many more are scheduled to be built in other villages.

Currently all the whites in the film crew have been phased out, as an all native crew has taken over. Though Tim Kennedy has gone, the process is still going strong under the impetus of the local people.

In his talk, Kennedy pointed out one difficult part of the process which many in film and community video have experienced. This is the emotional problem of the media producers having to adapt to loss of control of the medium. It is not easy to sit at an editing table

discusses the distinctions between pity, sympathy and empathy. He describes pity as hearing about how horrible a problem is, discussing it and then just walking away. Sympathy involves imposing your own solutions onto a problem, from a position of uninvolvedness.

"Now, the third thing, Empathy," he writes. "I feel the process we have developed in Skyriver, and what is happening in Challenge For Change, are good examples of Empathy because it takes involvement. It takes commitment which has to be done on the people's own terms. It has to be open-ended and the people must have complete control over it."

Most documentaries evoke only pity; they do not present viewers with alternatives for action. In projects like Skyriver, media processes are used to enable communities to find solutions for themselves.

For more information and copies of the newsletter, write to Challenge For Change, National Film Board of Canada, P.O. Box 6100, Montreal 101, Quebec.

## Challenge to WMAL sale probable

(WMAL, from page 1)

A bill currently pending in the Congress would extend the license renewal period from three to five years and make it more difficult for existing licenses to be challenged by community groups or potential competitors.

The Justice Department has urged the FCC to rule existing cross-ownership arrangements illegal on the basis of anti-trust principles. The issue is one of several priorities currently facing the Commission.

Licenses for D.C. broadcasters will come up for review in 1975. However, citizen groups have a much better chance of getting a broadcaster to agree to policy changes during a station transfer period than at license-renewal time. This is true primarily because a new owner is often willing to make concessions to the community so that the

business deal will be completed—often by the end of a given tax year.

At the present time the National Organization for Women has a petition to deny the license of WRC-TV because of hiring discrimination pending before the FCC.

Interest in D.C. in the WMAL/Star transfer has thus far been expressed by several community groups:

- The D.C. Chapter of National Organization of Women;

- The Communications Committee of the Adams-Morgan Organization, which has called a meeting on the issue for Aug. 1 at 8 p.m. at the Video Center.

Other interested groups may wish to contact NOW leader Kathy Bonk at 739-5128, or attend the AMO meeting at the Video Center.

## Community Video Report

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# FCC weighing crucial access, origination regs

Two items currently pending before the FCC hold great importance for the immediate future of cable television programming; if past policies are any measure, the public is liable to be the loser.

The larger and more comprehensive item is the Commission's Clarification of Rules and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, adopted April 17 (*Federal Register*, Vol. 39, No. 78).

This document significantly alters existing regulations, as a result of the past two years' regulatory experience at the FCC and the report of the Federal/State-Local Advisory Committee (FSLAC), which had been established with the passage of the original rules.

The second matter is Docket 19998, which seeks comments on mandatory local origination by cable systems. The Commission had ordered all CATV systems with 3,500 or more subscribers to begin program origination in 1969. The order was challenged in the courts, and went all the way to the Supreme Court before the authority of the FCC's rulemaking power was finally established. By then, the FCC had issued its lengthy cable rules, and had begun in effect to ignore the local origination question which it continued doing until the Cable Television Information Center requested a clarification earlier this year.

Both of these dockets deal with government requirements forcing the cable system operator to make some sort of local programming viable. Commission sources indicate the Local Origination Docket will come before the Commissioners before the end of the year, and the Commission's Cable Re-Regulation Task Force—which is considering further changes in the cable rules—will report by November.

## Reconsideration of Cable Rules

Although the April FCC document is formally a "clarification" of existing rules, it includes enough major changes to be considered a "substantive rulemaking" without full legal procedure, according to the National Association of Regulatory Commissioners.

Most of the Clarification deals with who is to regulate cable, with the FCC serving notice that it intends to maintain the primary role. Cities and states have called this posture "pre-emption" and it promises to be a major conflict in the future. The Commission prohibits local regulation of rates for leased channels, franchise fees above the 3% limit, local requirements to wire schools free, and other local options.

The FCC prohibits requiring more than 20 channels on a cable system, and allows cable operators to operate access channels on a "shared" basis among more than one system.

The document also asks for comments on technical problems, line extension policy, franchise duration, franchise renewals, and service to cable subscribers.

Many of the comments before the Commission address these major questions, particularly since their resolution affects powerful groups who have full-time paid legal staff to file comments.

But the Commission's strongly worded attack against any funding of public access and its operations does not bode well for the future of access. "An unfortunate misconception seems to have developed because of some over-expectations at the prospect of free access channels," says the Commission, noting in particular the demands for "excessive" amounts of equipment, programming and engineering personnel, and support for programming. "Too often these extra equipment and personnel demands become franchise bargaining chips rather than serious community access efforts."

The document also expresses doubts that any of the franchise fees above 3% and below 5% should be used for access programming, although this issue will be ruled on in another proceeding.

The Los Angeles Public Access Project (LAPA) has responded thus, "If the Commission does not feel that the cable operator should be obligated to provide programming support, and if the Commission continues to hold the position that the franchising authority cannot set up a funding structure through franchise fees, where does the Commission see production costs being generated?"

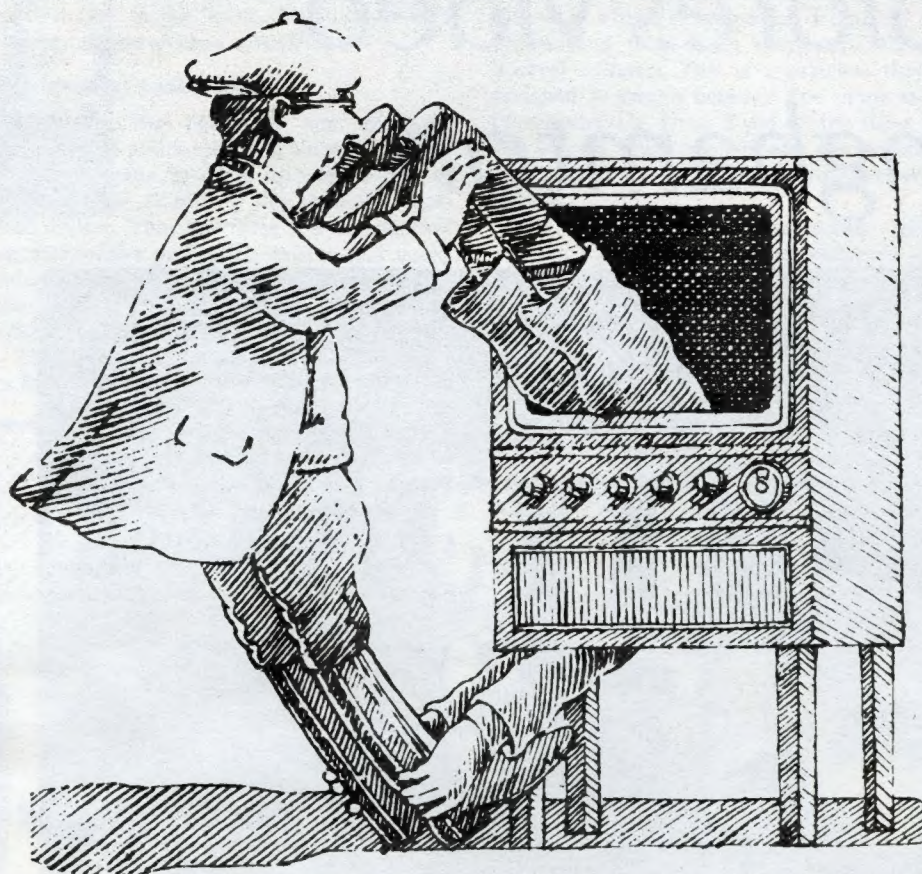


Illustration: Blue Sky/CPP

The National Black Media Coalition has also filed asking the Commission to reconsider its attitudes toward financing of access channels and toward other issues raised in the Clarification. "Throughout the Clarification's section on access," says the NBMC filing, "The Commission seems terribly concerned with the burden that access may put on the cable systems, but unconcerned with effectively promoting and safeguarding meaningful access to cable for the citizens who are its users and viewers." Claiming that "access is as much the cable operator's responsibility as it is the community's," NBMC calls on the Commission to state whether it will actually prohibit financial agreements between community groups and cable operators, given the fact that it does not require them.

## Mandatory Local Origination

If the Clarification document's attitude towards access is worrisome to citizens, the comments on the mandatory local origination question are even more depressing. 90% of those filing comments did not support the proposition that cable operators should be required to produce local programming.

## Not part of cable system:

# Independents program for local audiences

Recently, a consulting job brought us to Leonardtown, Md., a rural community southeast of Washington. Twisting country roads finally led us to the offices of WARD-TV, where we were to unravel several technical problems in their 1/2" B&W studio.

More interesting than our work for the day was learning from Judy Ward, the owner of WARD-TV, about local origination programming produced independently for local cable operators. Ms. Ward has been in that business for nine months, when she and a radio associate started St. Mary's (County) Cablevision, Inc.

Now the sole operator, Judy, with three or four assistants, provides two St. Mary's county cable systems—a total of 4500 subscribers—with all their local programming. They can watch up to 6 hours of local programs from a menu including local news, sports, religious discussion, specials on local issues (such as a proposed oil refinery), interviews with county political candidates, and the county commissioners' monthly press conference.

Judy says softball league games are

If both this position and the new controls on access financing take effect, the FCC will have eliminated virtually all sources of funds for locally produced programming, except such skimpy sources as foundations or local corporations and institutions.

Predictably, the industry claimed financial burden in calling for the elimination of the local origination requirement, citing many worthy programs that have sprung up without legal requirements to that effect. Industry spokesmen say they wish to continue being allowed to originate if they so desire.

Cities and states also predictably opposed the FCC rule, since they felt it was a matter for non-federal jurisdiction.

The final category includes a variety of "public interest" filings. Several RAND Corporation staffers and officials at the Cable Television Information Center filed as individuals calling for the elimination of the mandatory local origination provision, in favor of requiring those systems to furnish access requirements. For system owners to provide programming competes with access, which could be supported with a reasonable amount of funding.

The Washington Community Video Center suggested that the Commission require all

cable systems the choice of either devoting a percentage of their gross receipts (5%) to public access or maintaining a requirement that origination be provided, but at the same level of funding. The Center has raised the point that a commitment to local programming of some sort is the issue.

The Office of Communication, United Church of Christ and Consumers Union urged dropping origination requirements and allowing origination only when a system provides competitive access to channels.

The National Citizens' Committee for Broadcasting believes the local origination rule should be dropped but access requirements strengthened.

Among groups favoring the local origination rule are National Black Media Coalition, Philadelphia Community Cable Coalition and the cities of Somerville, and Pittsfield, Mass.

By press time of this issue these two dockets will be closed, although groups can continue to send informal support letters to the Executive Secretary, F.C.C., 1919 M Street, N.W. D.C. 20554.

Coming up in the fall will be a series of dockets dealing with franchising procedures (Nos. 20018-20024) as well as Open Channel's request for clarification on the question of using franchise fees for access.

Even if your group cannot make a formal filing, a simple letter is important. Keep alert, or public access and cable programming will get the federal ax.

—Neil Goldstein, Nick DeMartino

## Broadcast license bill still in Senate

Congress is still considering the bill that would extend the time and change the terms under which broadcasters receive their licenses from the FCC. Numerous public-interest groups have testified, and by deadline, more still were waiting. If the bill has not yet passed, you may wish to comment to members of the Senate Commerce Committee on what Citizens Information Project has called "the most dangerous piece of broadcasting legislation, and one of the most anti-human rights bills ever to be passed by a house of Congress."

For up-to-date details, you may contact Al Kramer, Citizens Information Project, 1346 Conn. Ave, N.W. #920, D.C. 20036. (202) 659-1676. They also have available alternative legislation.

Copies of any letters you may send to the Senate should be sent to the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, 2027 Mass. Ave, NW, D.C. 20036, which is coordinating opposition to the bill.

favorites and contribute greatly to the tremendous acceptance of their local programs.

Judy's arrangement with LexPar Cable-video and CATV Leonardtown is quite straightforward. She gets her time free, from which she earns advertising revenues.

After returning from this experience, I called Brian Owen at the National Cable Television Association (NCTA) to see if he knew of other local origination businesses elsewhere in the U.S.A. I was and am still intrigued with the possibility of local origination standing on its own economic base, independent of cable-operators, whose commitment to local programming is frequently tenuous. Brian referred me to Max Smith of Tiffen Valley Cable T.V. in Archbold, Ohio, who he heard had made a successful business as an independent local programmer.

Mr. Smith, who also runs a radio station in Archbold, claims he has had considerable success in the 14 months he has been in business. He and one other employee run the entire show, using fixed cameras, unattended,

with an emphasis on simple, unadorned live and first generation taped programs. They train and employ high school students for special occasions. He attributes his success to providing an excellent product and keeping costs down to a bare minimum. While some might consider his \$12,500 time-base-corrector a luxury, he insists it is essential to ensure a stable signal throughout the system, which advertisers demand. He provides subscribers with 12-18 hours per week of locally originated programs including some cassette packaged sports and educational films which he rents. Favorite locally produced shows are Big Ten football in the fall, Saturday morning simulcast FM radio and Cable talk/music shows, which involve teenagers.

The remarkable fact is that Max Smith has done all he has in a cable system with only 1000 subscribers.

If any of our readers know of any interesting and viable local origination projects, please let us know so we can pass on the news

—Grady Watts



# Experimental Television Center explores video as art in Binghamton

By Gerardine Wurzburg

After years of T.V. as theater, journalism, film and radio, people are investigating the electronic basis of the television image as an art. The explorations going on at several Centers in San Francisco, New York City, Boston, and Binghamton, N.Y. focus on video synthesizers and colorizers. (See below.)

Starting in 1967 an experimental video workshop was started at NET's San Francisco outlet, KQED, this workshop has since become the National Center for Experiments in Television. The same year a series of video experiments by artists were produced by WGBH, Boston's NET affiliate.

These groups and others were deeply influenced by the pioneering work of Eric Siegel and Nam June Paik on developing the video synthesizer.

## From Portapak Access to Synthesizer Access

For about two years the Experimental Television Center in Binghamton, N.Y. operated a free equipment access center for the community. The emphasis was on people running the equipment on projects they designed, much like the operations at video access centers across the country. In June of 1973, "after failing to secure funding from the community for the program, the Center shifted its focus toward the art of television."

Operating under a grant from the N.Y. State Council on the Arts, the Center has fostered the development of video art by making video equipment, including the Paik-Abe Colour Video Synthesizer, available to any videomaker from N.Y. State. The Center provides instruction and technical assistance when needed, along with a warm place to sleep.

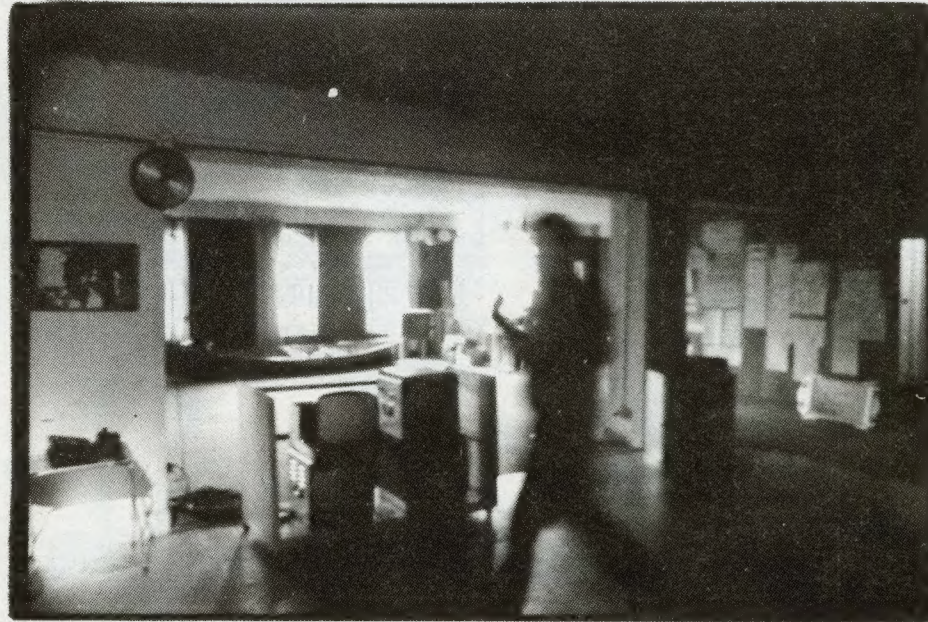
The Experimental Television Center occupies three floors of an old four story building, near a VFW Hall, on Court Street in Binghamton, N.Y. One floor has offices, a Paik-Abe Synthesizer, a darkroom, an electronics workbench, and a video projector. The other floors have living areas, and a most incredible collection of old TV sets, including the first color model, and the remains of TV sets from Nam June Paik's days there.

The staff is composed of four people: Ralph Hocking, director; Sherry Miller, assistant; Dave Jones, Technician; and Walter Wright, artist-in-residence.

The Center's prime concern is with training people in the use of synthesizers and helping other non-profit groups get synthesizers at their respective Centers. Ralph Hocking, the director stresses this aim: "We define ourselves as a place that builds and develops equipment and a place that acts as a production center for artists to work."

In building their equipment, they consciously keep the concept as simple as possible so that people with some background in video can readily understand and operate the synthesizer. "Even though some of our equipment is complex," Ralph said, "In concept, it is simple, just to keep it humane and so we don't scare people off."

Presently, they are working on a synthesizer that will be able to key on ten different levels



of gray. They hope to have that out in a year, and will make it available to non-profit organizations for as little as possible.

## Video Art

Video as an art form is still very much an infant. Explorations in the medium hold endless possibilities; and the willingness to take risks is a necessity.

For the audience, unaccustomed to such 'distortion' the first viewing of a synthesized tape can be an unsettling experience. It is this 'visual disorientation' that occurs when people first watch a synthesized piece, that makes some kind of visual education a necessity.

As part of this 'visual education, the Center conducts workshops for groups interested in

video as a medium for art activity.' Some of these involve the synthesizer.

Walter Wright and Ralph Hocking spoke of their experiences in these situations:

Walter: "It really is difficult to take this equipment out, to say a university, set it up and expect anything to happen immediately. First they come around and look at it and walk away, they think it's interesting, but they walk off. It is difficult to establish some sort of communication.

Ralph: What you do is get exposure that way and people sometimes come back to it. Sometimes on the third day they come back and want to work on the synthesizer.

Walter: Often when people first see it (synthesized work) they want to understand the structure but they can't perceive it immedi-



Artist-in-residence Walter Wright [above] and Director Ralph Hocking [left] work at the Binghamton Center for Experiments in Television.

ately so they dismiss it as being disorganized. Or they can't see an organization to it, and they don't sit back, instead they are all the time trying to figure out what is happening rather than looking at it.

## Viewing

The dream of many video artists, is that people will have synthesizers in their living room to play with at their leisure. A sophisticated 'entertainment center.' Others have used it as a concert, such as WGBH's series that artist-in-resident, Ron Hays did with synthesized images to classical music.

Having video cassettes of synthesized pieces in libraries is another possibility. People could take them out and go view them in bursts or whole, much the same way people read poetry, but this would be visual poetry.

Probably the most pleasurable work I've seen has been live, and in small settings. Walter also sees it as a more intimate event: "It is such a small screen and the contents of a lot of tapes made on this machine are very personal.

While some galleries and the like are pushing every piece of videotape by an artist, as art, Ralph Hocking is willing to be more patient: "I think the whole idea of video art is young. I want to stay there for awhile and I'm not in a rush to have a product."

## SYNTHESIZER RESOURCES

Sources for information on Video Synthesizers:  
Experimental Television Center, Ltd., 164 Court Street, Binghamton, New York 13901, 607/723-9509  
National Center for Experiments in Television, at KQED, 1011 Bryant Street, San Francisco, California 94103, 415/864-3760  
Video Support Project, 36 Decew Road, R.R. 1, St. Catherine, Ontario, Canada



## Just what is a video synthesizer?

There are basically two types: Direct and Indirect Video Synthesizers. Direct synthesis creates patterns without external inputs; indirect modulates input from external sources. Synthesizers developed by Eric Segal and Stephen Beck work on the direct system; machines developed by Nam June Paik, Steve Rutt and Etra work on indirect principles.

- For direct synthesis the beam intensity is switched in varying time intervals which give you basic geometric patterns on the screen, across the raster of scan lines. These patterns can be developed on by feedback.

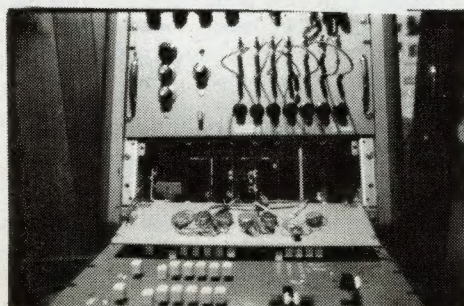
Several years ago I saw Stephen Beck working on the direct synthesizer he designed. I was amazed at how beautifully delicate his images were. Beck works at the National Center for Experiments in Television in San Francisco.

Beck's synthesizer generates two vertical and two horizontal lines. These positions can be changed by changing the time constants which determine their positions. Lines are cancelled by a logic circuit, leaving only dots where they cross.

- Nam June Paik's early experiments with magnetic distortion of the video image, form the root of indirect synthesis. In the video tube the raster of scan lines are generated by magnetic deflection of a single beam of electrons. Paik first used permanent magnets in his TV sets, which caused a constant distortion to all images. Later he went directly into the deflection coils which allowed him to have an external control system for distortion.

The machine up in Binghamton is a Paik-Abe Colour Video Synthesizer. It lets you mix together several inputs and then colorize them. Your inputs can be from cameras, straight from the oscillators which generate bars, and also from sound on a tape recorder or record which will also generate bars. There is also a high quality colour keyer built into it.

Views of the Paik-Abe Colour Synthesizer. Top right: synthesized image. Top left: View of synthesizer. Middle: Close-up of keyer, colorizer, and video mixer. Bottom: cameras shoot off monitors, these feed into the synthesizer.





# Summer news: no hot hardware, lotsa hot tape

By Ray Popkin

Not much happens in the hardware world in the summer, as most equipment is previewed at the trade shows of fall, winter and spring. So things on the hardware front will be fairly quiet until the National Association of Educational Broadcasters' show in November.

In fact, not only is nothing new coming out these months but some old equipment is mysteriously disappearing. Rumor has it that most of the color half-inch playback decks are being taken off the market (not the editors such as the Panasonic 3130 or Sony 8650). We were told that the Sony 8600 is now almost impossible to get as no more are being shipped. At first it seemed fairly odd, since it appears to be a good machine. It seems that, as ever, manufacturers are trying to build steam in the cassette market. Thus, sales emphasis will be on more ¾-inch. Unfortunately, this means that most program distributors will necessarily distribute on cassette, making it difficult to get programs on half-inch. We have already had some trouble getting health programs as they were available only on cassette.

## Panasonic updating portapacs

Another interesting development is the phasing out of the Panasonic portapac. Word has it that this fall the portapac that Panasonic has been selling for the last year and a half will be replaced by a new, lighter, smaller one. This is welcome news, for although some lightweight pacs have appeared recently they have not been compatible with the EIAJ standard. From the same "well placed source" we hear that Panasonic will also come out with an updated editing machine with vertical interval editing and flying erase heads. It is reported that this machine will sell for under the price of the Sony 8650 with the same features. These new editors will greatly upgrade the quality of edits, making edits a lot more likely to pass through Time Base Correctors. (Time Base Correctors are relatively new machines which make it possible to broadcast half-inch tape, if all goes well.)

A word about the importance of flying erase heads: flying erase heads are located adjacent to the video recording heads and rotate in the head drum at the same rate of speed. In other machines the erase head is located about five inches from the record heads. This means that there are five inches of tape between the record head and the erase head when you begin to make an edit. Thus the first few seconds of tape recorded on during each edit will not have been previously erased. If the signal already on the tape is stronger in video level than the segment being recorded over it, you will sometimes see a faint herring bone pattern for a few seconds following the edit point. With flying erase

heads this problem is eliminated, since there is only an insignificant amount of tape between the record and erase head.

## New company pushes economy

We have run across a new company embodying a philosophy that we really go for. They are trying to come up with a line of products that all sell for less than five hundred dollars. They feel there is a real market for inexpensive processing devices that could enhance the state of the art. The name of the company is Video Techniques, located at 1210 Windemere Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21218.

The device that interests us most is called an RS 170 sync generator and will sell for less

ning of your programs. Second is a multiburst generator which is for testing frequency response, and third is an automated vertical interval switcher. This is a switcher that is designed to switch between two cameras at preset intervals. Thus, if you set the timer for one second, the switcher will automatically switch from one camera to another every second.

We have heard that Concord which markets Panasonic equipment under its own name will be marketing a portapac with new color camera for under five thousand dollars. Also TEAC, the well-known stereo people, are getting into the business with a color system. They will be marketing the Sony ¾ inch

getting Super 8. There are several reasons for this. First of all Kodak has come out with a video player that takes super eight film and converts it to a video signal all in one compact desk top unit. Second, Kodak's new line of processors develop film in eighteen minutes. While such a processor might be expensive for a small producer they might be available through larger institutions. Super eight film could be shot and processed the same day and then transferred to videotape for editing through the videoplayer, thus the master edit would be first-generation video. Another advantage might be that, after several edits have been tried without cutting the original film, the film could then be cut and edited so that you would have both a film and a video master. Thus you could distribute the material on film loops, super eight and video formats.

The other large consideration is that a good super eight camera with sync sound might be more likely to render quality color than a bottom priced, single-tube color camera. Obviously there might be some disadvantages such as the cost of processing and film stock and the matter of getting used to shooting in short tight sequences rather than shooting hours of video. At this point, it is all speculative. Hopefully we will try and produce a program in this way and compare costs, time spent in production and quality.

## Summer heat destroys video tape

Nothing is worse for videotape than heat and humidity. Which is to say that the tapes you make this summer might not playback this winter. Extreme temperature conditions have the effect of slightly shrinking or expanding videotape. Though the change in size is minimal it will effect the time base stability of the videotape. The time base is dependent on the even distance between control track pulses, and, if the distance is increased or decreased even minutely, the time base is affected. Thus, if a tape is stored in the trunk of a hot car or in a humid basement the image quality can be counted on to decrease. These conditions will greatly worsen if a hot video tape is played, as the tape will be likely to stretch even more.

Currently we are looking into problems in the nature and care of videotape. Naturally if it is kept in its box at room temperature in the cellophane wrapper you prolong the life and quality of your tape. Some people tell us that even in optimum conditions tape image life will not span more than five years. While we feel this is probably not the case, we are seeking some answers and would like some feedback on this matter.

We also plan to write an article soon on the problems of cablecasting half-inch tape. If you have been cablecasting half-inch tape, let us know how you do it and what problems you have had.

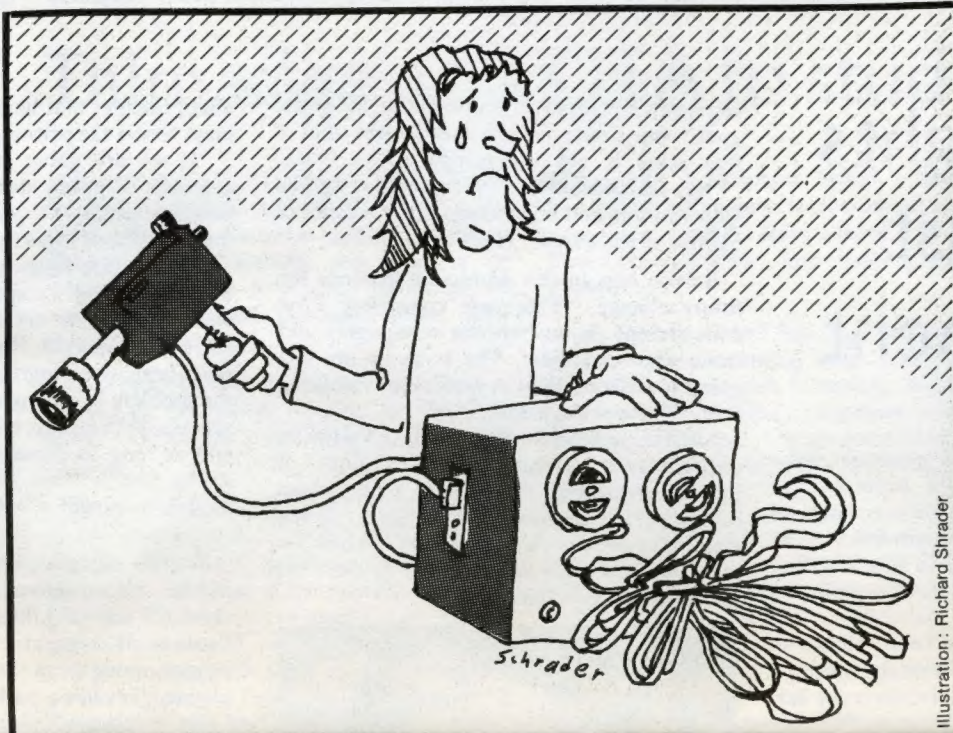


Illustration: Richard Shrader

## hardware notes

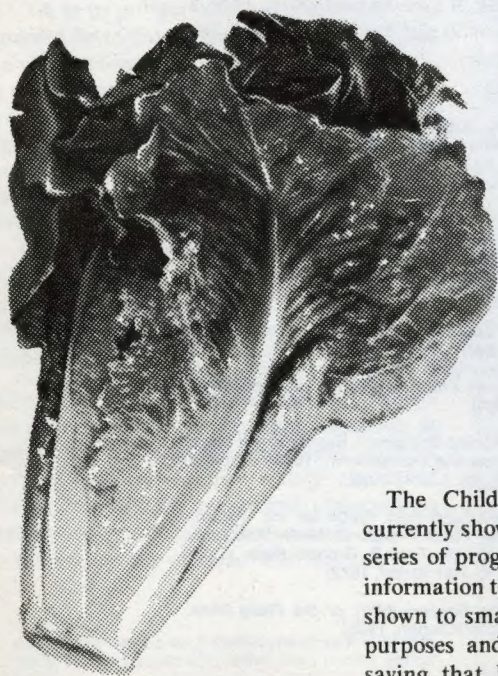
than \$400. This device, when added to a camera or special effects generator will provide the same standard of sync used in broadcasting. Thus, theoretically, you could plug an inexpensive system right into a broadcast system. While there wouldn't really be much reason to do this, the device would be useful in upgrading the quality of sync on half-inch and one-inch tapes. The better the standard of sync the better the chance of stable copies, clean edits and time-base correctability.

Video Techniques are starting their line with three other products. One is a digital countdown generator which will give a nine second countdown appearing on the begin-

portable recorder under their own name with a color camera. At this time we don't really know if the camera is of their own manufacture or Sony's.

## Film as a Color System?

For the first time in three years of video it has occurred to us that maybe film isn't so bad after all. For certain kinds of production super eight technology might serve as well as a bottom line color video system. Where instant feedback is desired, of course, video would remain untouchable as in the case of multi-camera work. For educational programs that we know will require editing and take time to prepare we are seriously considering



## CTW unveils Leafy Green Vegetable

By Ray Popkin

The Children's Television Workshop is currently showing for evaluation the first in a series of programs designed to impart health information to adults. While the show is being shown to small test audiences for evaluation purposes and not for review, I can't resist saying that I found much of it extremely funny and entertaining as well as informative.

Viewers in small screening rooms are given a health quiz prior to the show and then asked almost identical questions at the end to test for the retention of information. Viewers are also asked their opinions concerning the show's entertainment content.

The first show deals primarily with hypertension, over-weight, nutrition, breast cancer and Immunization. Such stars as Howard Cosell, Bill Cosby, Jodi Miller, Peter Falk, the Brussels Sprout and Broccoli present the health information in a manner combining seriousness and humor.

One line in the section on leafy green vegetables, for instance, goes some thing like this: "If I was in love with a girl and really liked her alot I'd give her a head of romaine lettuce; that would be love." This remark is followed by the devouring of a table full of leafy green vegetables, Tom Jones style.

This section of the program is followed by Bill Cosby doing a humorous monologue on whooping cough and immunization. Peter Falk played his Columbo routine, tracking

down a case of hidden hypertension: "Ah, I really don't mean to bothah you sir, it's just one more thing, you see, well don't take this personally, it's just that some people don't really know they have hypertension."

Breast cancer was discussed in a more serious manner, with a visit to a family, in which the mother has breast cancer. The documentary style visit illuminates the results of a member of a family having cancer. This section was followed by a demonstration of a self-help breast exam.

All of this information was wrapped around a continuing skit taking place in a shopping center drug store. The subject areas would come up in the situation comedy at the lunch counter; then the action would cut away to various other performers.

It will be interesting to see the results of the testing. My feeling is that everyone who watches will show a definite retention of new health information. Hopefully under local incentive this program will be followed by others giving further health care instruction.



# Newest public interest campaign—citizen input in technology assessment

(This article taken from materials by National Council for the Public Assessment of Technology)

Had people known, sixty years ago, that the automobile would bring—along with its manifest advantages—appalling environmental devastation, steps might have been taken to reduce its adverse impacts.

Twenty-five years ago, when most people were hailing the advent of television, few understood that this new communications technology might be used to spew violence into every American home and to manipulate the minds and pocketbooks of consumers, often against their best interests.

Today, many technological programs, often funded by taxpayers' dollars, are being launched that may equal the influence of these technologies upon our lives and communities.

Fortunately, we are now beginning to recognize that society ought to and can make choices about the impact of technology upon our lives. Technology assessment (TA) is the idea that the likely social, economic and environmental impacts of new products, processes and technologies should be systematically evaluated in advance of their use. TA is also usually defined to include the impacts associated with the new application of present

technology (e.g. more highway construction in urban areas). Advocates of the concept describe it as an "early warning system" for society which will help avoid or reduce the undesirable consequences of technological change.

Although relatively new, the TA concept has quickly acquired fashion in some government, academic and corporate circles.

Many persons who have been professionally or officially involved with the evolution of formal technology assessments approach TA as a new academic "discipline," but a look at how TA actually developed reveals its origins as a political tool, forged in the heat of public

controversy and debate.

Over the past decade, voluntary citizen advocacy groups concerned with the adverse impacts of technological developments have increasingly influenced decisions about science and technology. The influence of voluntary action was perhaps best symbolically represented in the fight against the SST, but there are dozens of other, more significant examples of what amounts to a widespread civic revolt. Citizen opposition to highways, airports, power plants and to other forms of urban expansion has now flared up in virtually every American city. Ralph Nader and his colleagues have attracted vast public sup-

port for the reform of corporate and bureaucratic institutions producing or regulating consumer goods, including everything from food and water to clothing and shelter. Organizations devoted to racial and sexual equality have begun to zero in on inequities in the distribution of technology's benefits, such as jobs, income and career opportunity. Industrial workers have grown restive about occupational health and safety and job satisfaction and security, all of which are increasingly determined by remote decisions about technology.

Some strong efforts have been made to portray the loud complaints about technology's ill effects as the work of a few know-nothing technophobes and hopelessly romantic fools, but several factors have prevented the derailment of citizen-initiated demands for more humane technology.

First, it seems clear that the legitimate and vital interests of a great many people are involved: the young, the aged, the handicapped, the poor, minorities, women, workers, consumers and taxpayers hardly constitute an insignificant portion of the population.

Second, citizen leaders, whether representing large, well-organized voluntary groups or unorganized mass constituencies, have learned to promote their views and goals with growing skill and effectiveness. They have made vigorous and ingenious use of litigation, political pressure, public opinion and community organization to force a perceptible widening of policy-making processes.

Third, citizen groups in alliance with their new-found volunteer or low-paid experts and technical advisors have now begun to consciously design and implement their own positive strategies for social change. Far from being pipe-dreams, these strategies reflect experience tested under the harsh conditions of reality and are based upon acute and highly accurate readings of social and political feasibility. Thus, the frequently-heard charge that citizen organizations are always against, and never-for, something is simply not true.

Although the response of government and the private sector to the thrusts of citizen organizations has been belated and small, one slight indication that the message is getting through is the formal appearance of structured TA within established social institutions. Bear in mind that TA, after all, is supposed to anticipate and examine those very consequences of technology which pop up unexpectedly to kill or harm people or to destroy or threaten property or to otherwise provoke public opposition. Anyone acquainted with the sluggish pace with which technocratic bureaucracies greet change will doubt that true institutional innovations, such as TA, will emerge or long survive without strong outside pressure, in this case, from the public.

## Your Foot in the Door to TA

If TA is to protect citizens and consumers impacted by technological change, there must be a vigorous institutionalized means of alerting and informing voluntary organizations of many kinds concerned with such impacts. These groups must be provided with lead time and before the fact information concerning new technologies and new applications of existing technologies. The National Council for the Public Assessment of Technology (NC/PAT), a new, non-profit organization, has been formed to meet these needs and to facilitate public participation in all aspects of technology assessment.

One of NC/PAT's first actions was to prepare criteria to aid governmental agencies in conducting technology assessment studies. These criteria were then widely circulated within the voluntary sector and endorsed by many groups and individual citizen leaders. Here is a summary of these criteria:

1. Assessment agencies should develop new concepts and methods for assessment, rather than merely gather new facts.
2. New ways of assessing private sector activities are needed for these activities do much to shape our social and physical environment. The interactions between public and private sectors should also be assessed.
3. The agency should actively involve public participation in the assessment process by fully publicizing

each assessment as soon as conceived and by full, quick and easy disclosure of assessment data and reports. Active solicitation by the agency of citizen views on the technology being studied should be accomplished at a very early stage in the study's development.

4. Funds should be made available to enable non-profit citizen organizations to participate in assessment studies.

5. The agency should make use of an adversary approach to assessment when contrasting opinions exist. Separate assessments should be made by interests favoring the proposal as well as interests opposing the proposal. An assessment of the adverse effects of the technology should be carried out in detail. Views of experts and technicians outside the field of technology being assessed as well as views of competent generalists should also be included. Interaction should be promoted among those holding opposing viewpoints as well as those in the various disciplines involved.

6. Assessments should be comprehensive in scope and well defined in detail. The interdependence of related technologies should receive adequate consideration for

to study one technology as isolated from all others can be misleading. The "do-nothing" alternative should always be considered.

7. Assessments should include a discussion of how economic costs and benefits are defined. Who will receive benefits and who will assume the risks and costs from a proposed technology? A discussion of the effect of the technology on minority and lower income groups should always be included.

8. Assumptions underlying assessment methods, and areas of ignorance or lack of data, should be clearly identified and discussed.

## FURTHER RESOURCES IN TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

National Council for the Public Assessment of Technology, Byron Kennard, Chairman, 1714 Mass. Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 872-0317. He'll send you information about OTA, position paper, list of advisors, and put you on mailing list.

Joseph Coates, National Science Foundation, Office of Exploratory Research and Problem Assessment, 1900

Penn. Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20550. Author of short paper "Public Participation in Technology Assessment."

Office of Technology Assessment, 300 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20515. Dick Kirsten, press officer (will put you on mailing list).

"The Bend in the River Council: Documents and Dispatches on a Media Referendum," *Rolling Stone*, July 18, 1974, pp. 48-50. Collection of short articles by creators of Oregon's state-wide problem-solving symposium, BIRC. Best part is description of structure, which was funded by National Endowment, and a list of some 15 similar projects which attempt to involve citizens in futures planning, many using communications technologies.

Hazel Henderson, "Information and the New Movement for Citizen Participation," *Annals of the Amer. Acad. of Political and Social Science*, March 1974, pp. 34-43.

Institute for Local Self-Reliance, 1717 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. Working toward alternative technologies which can help communities become self-sufficient.

## Talmadge asks OTA to study rural cable

Sen. Herman E. Talmadge (D-Ga.), Chairman of the Senate Agriculture and Forestry Committee, has proposed a major project to determine the feasibility and value of experimental efforts to develop public service uses of broadband communications technology in rural areas.

The proposal was made in a June 5 letter to Emilio Q. Daddario, Director of the Congress' Office of Technology Assessment (OTA).

OTA was created as a Congressional advisory board by the Technology Assessment Act of 1972, which was designed to give Congress the capability of systematically evaluating the likely social, economic and environmental impacts of new products, processes and technologies in advance of their use. It will complete its first year of operation in December with a budget of under \$4 million.

OTA is supervised by a joint Congressional

Technology Assessment Board chaired by Sen. Edward Kennedy. It receives requests for assessment projects from Senate and House Committee chairmen and ranking minority members.

To date the Board has approved some six project areas, including solar energy, mass transportation, ocean materials, technology and world trade. One assessment project in the area of drugs has been completed. OTA has received some 40 requests from Congress since Jan.

The Talmadge proposal comes at a time of increasing interest in the social uses of broadband technologies like cable television and communications satellites, although most projects have tended to focus on urban applications. Talmadge, a powerful member of the Senate, recommended the study after correspondence and contact with a number of advocates of rural telecommunications uses,

particularly those in the rural cooperative movement.

Russell A. O'Neal, general manager of the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association, urged support of such a project to stem the tide of rural emigration and to improve social services and the quality of life, citing experiments in Trempealeau County, Wisc., and other rural locations, as well as Peter Goldmark's "New Rural Society" scheme in Connecticut.

According to OTA Deputy Director Daniel DeSimone, the staff is working up a detailed proposal and budget together with Talmadge's staff, which should be ready for presentation to the full Congressional board within a month.

De Simone rates the issue of cable television as "a very important area that ranks high in terms of issues like national growth policy, population distribution and social services delivery."

## NSF funds 7 designs of 2-way cable

Research Applied to National Needs (RANN), a division of the National Science Foundation, has announced seven \$100,000 grants for research in two-way cable technology. The grants have been made for the design of experiments in the application of two-way cable communications technology to the delivery of social services and urban administration.

It is expected that each project will have as its primary output a proposal for the execution of such an experiment or package of experiments, and that the most promising of these designs will be selected during Phase II.

The original RANN program solicitation suggests that projects in the areas of citizen-government communication systems, consumer information systems for decentralizing government and improved service delivery systems be included.

RANN hopes that this project will create the first integrated body of knowledge concerning two-way technology and how it can be applied to urban problems. This is particularly important since original "blue sky" predictions of rapid two-way use of cable have never materialized.

The proposals of the NSF grantees reflected a sober mood. Most of the proposals call for the wiring of very limited and specific locations for the handling of very specific programs. Grantees are required to work very closely with local governments and the cable systems involved so that the projects do not exceed either the needs of the municipality or the capability of the cable system.

All of the proposals stressed two priorities: access to information on the part of the public and access to feedback on the part of government. One proposal made the point that a local government should become ineligible for certain capital improvement grants if they could not get proper citizen participation.

One of the most common project suggestions running through the proposals was that of neighborhood information centers and neighborhood city halls. These centers would be wired to the central government service headquarters. One proposal suggested one-stop neighborhood service counters which

would be wired to computers thereby enabling them to have the information necessary to issue vendors' permits, drivers' licenses or any other kinds of permits. Also available through the cable at such centers would be all kinds of city records such as land records and consumer information, bus schedules, voting information and services availability.

Citizen input and feedback was another main area of concern. Here it was proposed that city council and other agency meetings be televised in the community. One system in fact reported that 46% of the cable subscribers already watch such meetings. Some proposals called for citizens being polled during actual council votes through the use of polling boxes attached to the cable in the home, while others suggested having neighborhood centers where the meetings could be watched and feedback could be given either in the form of polling or picture links.

One grantee, the Cable Television Information Center project in Peoria, Ill., plans as one of its applications to wire both senior citizen centers and private homes for access to legal services and mental health centers, and to provide information in such areas as nutrition and homemaking.

Michigan State University plans to use the system for teleconferencing between communities and municipal centers, with neighborhood advisory councils being conferred into emergency meetings. They also plan remote access to court information, wiring of neighborhood legal service centers and presentation of courses to firemen while they are on duty in the fire stations. They also plan a whole gamut of programs in child development, with training through the cable for parents of the retarded; training of foster parents; dropout counseling and other services.

Other services planned are manpower training, access to job training, parking and traffic information dispersal, in-service training for teachers, day care staff development, school system data links, and meter reading.

Grantees below will conduct research in the cities listed in parentheses:  
Dr. Thomas Baldwin, Department of Television &

Radio, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich. 48823 (Rockford, Illinois)

Mr. Paul I. Bortz, Denver Research Institute, University of Denver, Denver, Colo. 80210 (El Segundo, Calif.)

Dr. Arthur I. Larky, Department of Electrical Engineering, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa. 18015 (Allentown-Bethlehem, Pa.)

Dr. William A. Lucas, The Rand Corporation, 2100 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037 (Spartanburg, South Carolina)

Dr. Jacqueline Park, The Alternate Media Center, New York University, 144 Bloerck Street, New York, N.Y. 10012 (Reading, Pa.)

Mr. Bowman Cutter, Director, Cable Television Information Center, The Urban Institute, 2100 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037 (Peoria, Illinois)

Mr. Herbert S. Dordick, Annenberg School of Communications, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California 90007 (Los Angeles, Calif.)

## SF group plans ads for 1st Amendment

Public Media Center is proposing an advertising campaign about broadcast communications and the First Amendment, to coincide with the nation's Bicentennial celebration.

Accompanying the broadcast campaign would be an educational road show about First Amendment rights, which would "focus on the functional basis of free speech and the need to create new institutional guarantees for the basic freedoms that are essential to democracy."

Public Media Center is a "public interest advertising agency" which organizes volunteer professional talent from the ad industry to create broadcast spots and print ads advocating public-interest positions, which would ordinarily not be represented by paying customers—America's corporations. PMC recently finished a series of ads to counter the oil companies' media blitz about the so-called energy crisis, which they are working to get aired. PMC was created earlier this year by former staff members of a similar group—Public Interest Communications.

For further information, contact PMC, 2751 Hyde Street, San Francisco, Calif. 94109. (415) 885-0200.

## Barron fights to open 1st Amendment

By Nick DeMartino

It might be enough to generate some pessimism, if not downright bitterness: to spend seven long and often solitary years as legal advocate for a more broadened view of the First Amendment, only to lose the first major test of that doctrine in a unanimous Supreme Court decision.

But Jerome Barron is not given to defeatism. "I intend to keep writing, talking," says the George Washington University law professor.

"The Supreme Court isn't frozen in concrete," he says referring to its June 25 decision in the *Miami Herald Publishing Co. vs. Tornillo* case, in which he unsuccessfully argued that true First Amendment freedom of the press should guarantee the public's right of reply to a newspaper's unjust attacks.

Barron has been proposing a doctrine of access to the mass media for years in law review articles, speeches, and in his classes in mass communications law. The *Tornillo* case provided a good test for many of the arguments he has been proposing, most of which have gone against the grain of prevailing legal wisdom in the First Amendment field.

The *Miami Herald*, the monopoly daily newspaper in South Florida, had refused to print replies to the paper's editorials critical of Pat Tornillo, a candidate for the state legislature and a local teachers' union official. Tornillo sued for relief and damages based on a 1913 state statute guaranteeing the "right of reply" to political candidates under attack for their records or personal issues. A lower court found the statute unconstitutional, but the Florida Supreme Court reversed in favor of Tornillo.

The Supreme Court, in a decision widely acclaimed by the nation's print and broadcast media owners, ruled that the right of reply statute was unconstitutional, not only because it exacted a penalty for making an editorial judgment, but because it violates the absolute First Amendment right of the owners of the media to decide "size and content of the paper and the treatment of public issues and officials."

While recognizing the intent of access proponents to open up what is an increasingly monopolistic media market, the Court argued that "it has yet to be demonstrated how governmental regulation of this crucial (editorial) process can be exercised consistent with the First Amendment guarantees of a free press as they have evolved to this time."

Barron has noted, however, that the Court did address itself to the core issue which still remains unresolved. Declaring that "a

responsible press is an undoubtedly desirable goal," the Court nonetheless admits that a free press is not necessarily a fair press. "Press responsibility is not mandated by the Constitution and like many other virtues it cannot be legislated," reads the decision.

Barron sees in this admission grounds for future change. "There are competing First Amendment claims between newspapers and those who read them. The issue is: are you going to exhaust First Amendment rights on those who own the media?"

"At the present time we are faced with an unprecedented assault on the values of individual privacy, the right to reply, of an individual's reputation, and on access to the means of communicating to fellow citizens"—all rights which are not included in the First Amendment, says Barron.



"If the problem of the assault on human values by the media increases, it will have an effect on the country, and on its institutions, the Court included."

The problem will only be solved if the press takes on internal restraints which the law does not currently force it to take, says Barron. And, he notes, "part of the problem is the nature of the system. Nobody with absolute power is able to see that theirs is an undesirable situation."

Barron has argued for years that the communications revolution, increased costs in the newspaper industry, accelerating concentration of media control, and other factors of modern society have rendered obsolete the legitimacy of absolute freedom of the press for owners of media.

Those economic and political forces have given rise to a strong citizens' movement for access to the mass media; Barron sees this movement as healthy and important.

"Certainly this case will slow the movement to some extent. But the movement for access is too important, there are too many people interested. There is a strong feeling among the people that no power should be absolute, that everybody should be accountable and that goes for the press, too."

The *Tornillo* case may be an example of Watergate fallout, says Barron, but there is a backlash against the media developing.

If newspapers and television stations harden their policies toward citizen access, there are other, alternative means of getting the message out, though Barron makes no bones

about the fact that he considers the dominant mass media the primary target.

"If we are going to have access to the channels of public debate, it must be in the prestige media. TV and newspapers are the marketplace of ideas in America."

He has little faith in access through cable television and community closed-circuit video. "There is nothing to suggest in the current framework that cable will offer any real alternative programming. One can't solve the problem by saying technology can provide access. Technology is harnessed to capital, and as long as those who control broadcast media have a hand in developing cable, it's foolish to expect a serious dislocation of the status quo."

Barron regards the creation of dedicated public access channels as perhaps "the cleverest way of killing real public access," because it separates community-produced programming from the mainstream of the dialogue. "It's like a park for freaks."

He compares public access cable to the history of the underground press. When radicals first published underground papers, he explains, many Establishment newspapers opposed them, by moving to restrict the rights of their reporters, blocking them from obtaining police passes, denouncing them editorially. Then, as the public began demanding access to the Establishment press, the critics began changing their tune, saying, as Barron put it, "the public doesn't need access to daily newspapers as long as there is an underground press."

Barron is quick to point out, however, that he regards the public access, cable TV and video movements with respect. "The important idea in access is the sense of participation.... Activities like those of Community Video and other groups are of the utmost importance."

And, with characteristic optimism, he urges access advocates to keep up the battle:

"Like Niebuhr said, you can believe in original sin and the fallibility of man and still work for progressive causes. Work as if you will win, even if you have doubts that you'll prevail. After all, it's so important to give a voice to people who get no other forum for their ideas."

## FURTHER READING

Barron, Jerome A., *Freedom of the Press for Whom?* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973) \$3.95.

—, "Access to the Press—A New First Amendment Right," *Harvard Law Review*, Vol. 80, p. 1641, (1967)

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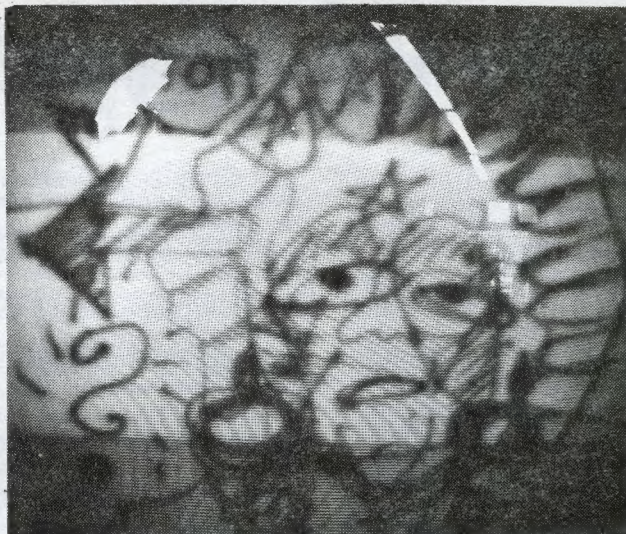
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# WCVVC self-report

A Self-interview about Recent WCVVC Activities

## "So, What Do You Do There All Day?"

Friends who've dropped by the WCVVC storefront recently have no doubt noticed that our *videospace* has doubled in size, since we acquired the other half of our building. This makes it possible for there to be a much larger and more comfortable, permanent viewing space, as well as separate studio, editing and office areas. It's much easier to breathe here now, and it'll be even better when we locate another big, used air-conditioner to help us and our tape viewers through another D.C. summer.

Future space improvements will include: construction of a *Projection Booth for Film Screenings*, sound proofing, hanging monitors and more office space.

## "So, What Do You Acutally Do For A Living?"

The WCVVC is presently involved in two contracted productions for local institutions. A series of training tapes are being produced for the *National Paralegal Institute*, of the OEO. They will be used in their training programs around the country. We're also taping a series of four lectures sponsored by the *Smithsonian Associates* entitled, "*Beyond Taste: On Design*."

## "Ok, What Does the Community Stand for in your Name?"

We're doing more training and tape planning with community groups in the Adams Morgan neighborhood. The AMO Communications Committee is actively gathering feedback from the community about the small cable system being planned, so as to assess community needs and input into the project.

The last CVR mentioned the completion of "*It's Our Park*," a 10 min. tape produced by WCVVC and members of various community groups. It is about the need for a local land tract to be bought for the Adams Morgan Neighborhood and made into a park. The tape shows how the park is already being well used by local kids and adults for recreation space in an otherwise parkless area. The tape has been shown most recently to a few Senate

staff people as part of a meeting with Adams Morgan organization representatives to discuss the issue. Hopefully in the future actual members of the Senate and House appropriations committees dealing with the D.C. budget will find the time to view the tape and hear out community representatives before the final budget is decided upon this fall. In the meantime, WCVVC shows the tape often around the city to inform residents about the issue and in addition to demonstrate a viable use of video as an organizing tool in the community.

## "So What Else is New?"

Other new tapes produced at WCVVC include:

*The Self-Reliant Neighborhood* — A half-hour tape done by Mike Arnow and Nick DeMartino about alternative forms of technology being used presently in Adams Morgan. Included in the demonstrations are: hydroponic gardening, aquaculture, solar cooking.

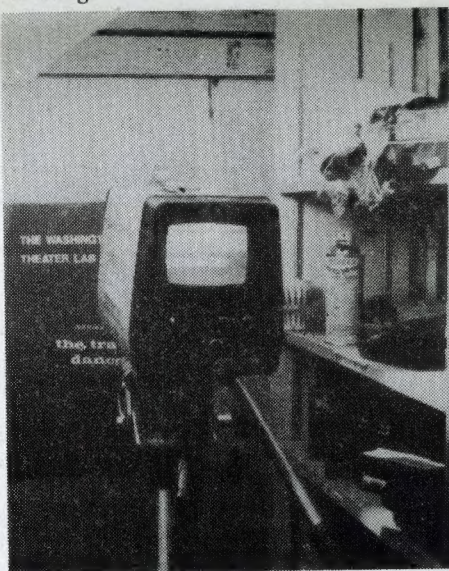


Photo: Chris Michaels

*The Travel Dance* — A tape done by Vicki Costello recording the Washington Theater Laboratory's performance of their original theater/dance piece "The Travel Dance." 30 min.

*The Amateur, Reflections of Zelda* — A 75 min. recording of the Washington Area Feminist Theater's production of Leslie Jacobson's original two-act play about Zelda Fitzgerald.

Both tapes, done with hand-held portapaks, were done with their primary aim being to provide feedback and documentation for the cast, crew and directors of the productions. We also may show them at one of the regular Thursday nite screenings of tapes for the public.

In addition, we offer many of our tapes for sale and/or exchange. Major categories of available tapes include: community news, events and issues, health, feminist, dance and theater, and others of general interest. For a complete list and information on costs and dubbing contact WCVVC.

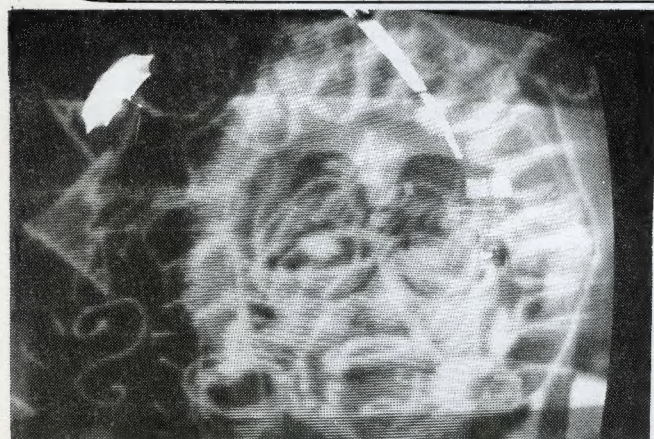
## Now, about Video Training:

Two summer beginning video classes are now in process. There are people in them from various community groups including: The Free Clinic, RAP, The Women's Educational Fund and the Latin Youth Center.

This spring, WCVVC staffperson Gerri Wurzburg initiated a special training series for five high school students from the Latin Youth Center. Their skills are improving as they enter a more frequent summer phase of training. Aided by Mike Arnow they will be making a tape about activities of Spanish groups in Adams Morgan.

Our regular, six session training series, open to anyone on a sliding scale cost basis (from \$50 to \$100), will continue this late summer and early fall. The beginner and intermediate classes will be offered according to the schedule that follows.

If you wish to register for any class, please drop us a note, give us a call or come by the Center. We need the following information in order to register you: name, address, day phone, which class you want to take, and the amount you can afford to donate to cover costs (from \$50 to \$100, unless you meet with us to discuss special hardship). These classes have all been filling very rapidly. Please register early.



Photos: Chris Michaels

Helen Ackerman, a member of a WCVVC beginning video workshop, is the subject of an experiment in using videospace. Two cameras take images from different rooms and mix them into one superimposed image. One camera captures the real Helen (top, left). The other camera is recording the work of another participant as he traces a likeness of Helen (top, center) directly from the monitor which displays both images simultaneously. By manipulating the effects in the video mixer, to which both cameras are connected, we are able to achieve numerous distortions of poor Helen. In case you're wondering, the little umbrella in each picture is the reflection of our lighting rig.

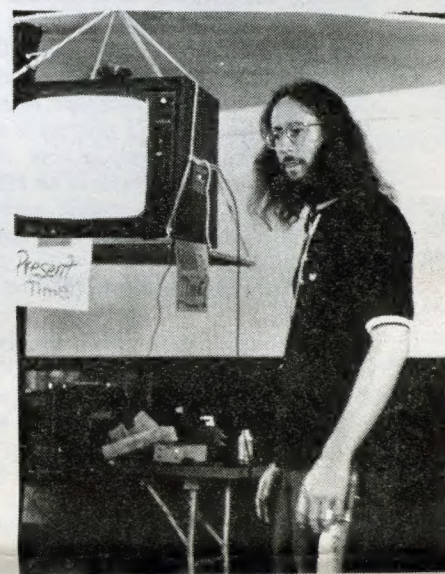
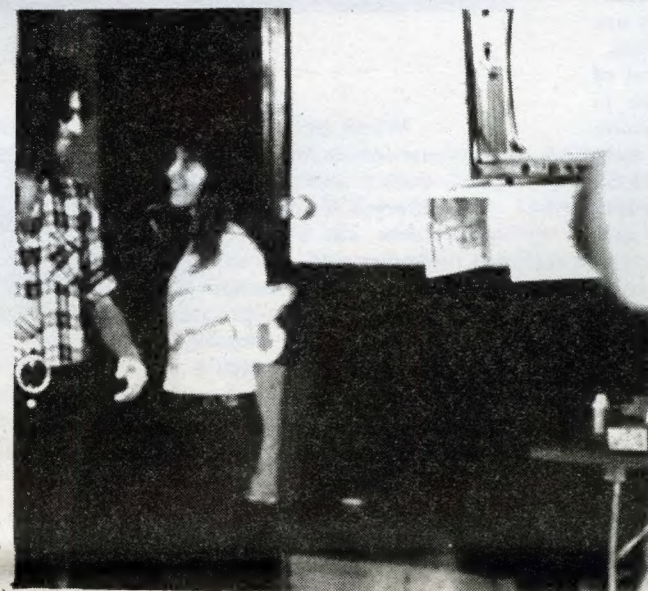
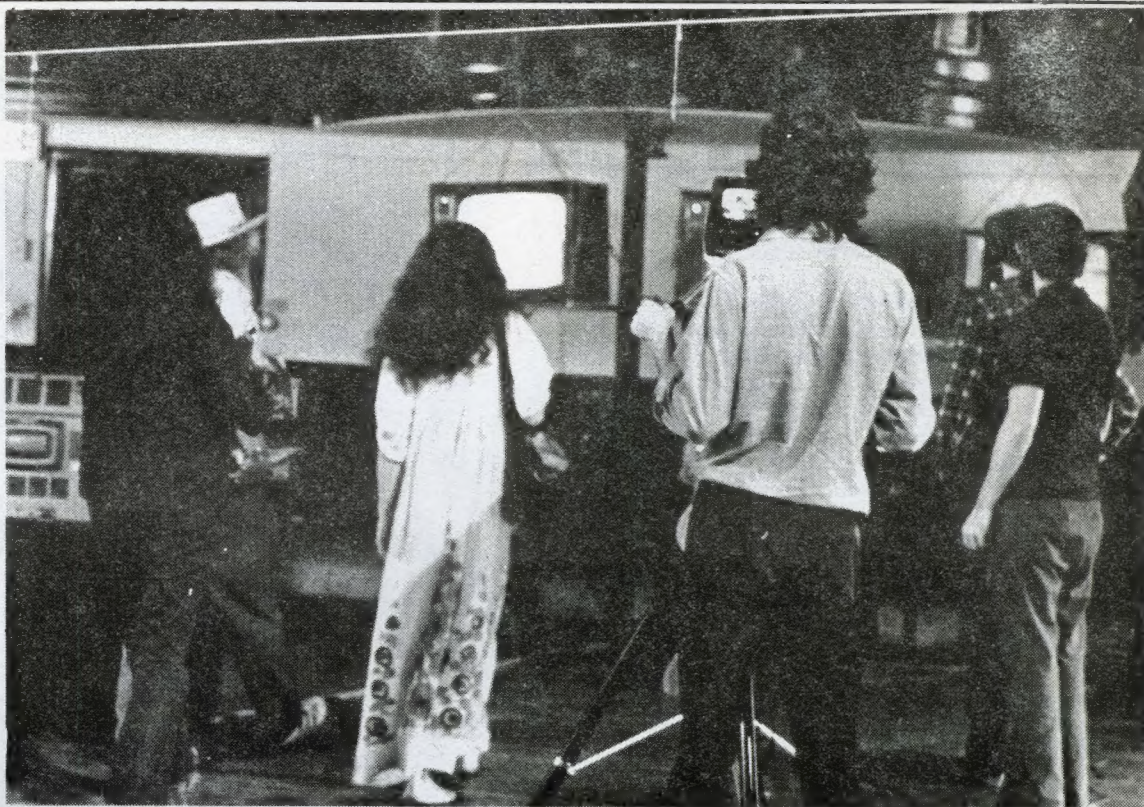


# Video as voodoo: free environment

For more than four hours people wandered into the Grace Church building from the outdoor music concert. Billed as a Video Environment, the space could have been the Voodoo Room, judging from the responses of participants. As they entered they were immediately confronted with their own image on a monitor, which was in turn displayed on a bank of monitors to their immediate right. The trippy part came when they discovered that not only were they being spread out for everyone to see in the present, but by looping the tape from the first image into other decks, we were able to create a time-delay effect. People could see themselves NOW, and then see themselves five seconds ago, and then 10 seconds ago. As the camera relentlessly kept recording NOW, the past became present and future.



As participants entered the Grace Church video environment they encountered a monitor displaying a picture of themselves fed from cameras placed throughout the room (top, right). The effect can be mesmerizing (bottom, right), particularly as they looked up to the bank of monitors displaying the tape delay system (bottom, left). The images which were created on the monitors were controlled by the directors, who mixed the camera sources through a special-effects generator (above).



The Video Center's newly expanded VideoSpace is the location for regular video screenings and community meetings. A good-sized audience enjoyed the first showing of the two WCVC tapes: "Self-Reliant Community" and "Solar Foam Home," on June 27.

## AMO communications group seeking neighborhood input

Adams-Morgan citizens have been working on two aspects of the proposed neighborhood cable television system ever since the project idea was announced at an AMO Communications Committee meeting in May.

Two subcommittees were established, one to examine the availability of utility conduit space in the neighborhood, the other to develop community participation in the development of the system.

The proposed system would be a large "closed-circuit" TV system offering three channels of bi-lingual programming by means of cables that would be strung through the neighborhood and attached to the regular TV sets located in community centers, schools, and other locations.

The Community Subcommittee has made its first task the development of a process for conveying information to community groups. Subcommittee members meet with community groups to explain the proposed system and determine, by means of a questionnaire, whether groups are interested in using the

cable and helping to develop it.

The subcommittee is interested in receiving answers to the following questions so that it can adequately plan where a cable system might best be implemented and what the fundraising costs are likely to be:

Does a group desire to have cable service? Do they have a TV set already? What are their information needs at present? Do they want to have a representative on the governing body of a cable system? Would they be willing, if necessary, to pay for installation of cable service? Would they be able to pay for programming services? Will they offer a letter of support to try and raise funds?

In addition, questions are included relating to the development of programming, and video training.

A general progress meeting of the full Communications Committee will be held Aug. 1, at 8 p.m. at the Video Center. New Members are welcome to join at that time.

For more information, call Page Gilgannon at the Center: 462-6700.

## WCVC sets screenings for August

August screening sessions at the Washington Video Center have been set for Thursday nights and include the following programs:

**Aug. 1: AMO Communications Committee** will meet to hear reports from the two cable TV subcommittees which have been working since last month and to discuss the possibility of AMO entering a challenge to the WMAL-TV/Star-News ownership transfer (See article, p. 1).

**Aug. 8: Kids' night at the Video Center:** starting at 7:30 p.m., the Video Center will become a video environment for the youth of the neighborhood to experiment with. Emphasis will be on participation and creativity with live video experiences. Adults welcome, if they act like kids!

**Aug. 15: WCVC Retrospective:** Celebrating the second anniversary of the Video Center's founding, staff members will show excerpts from the Center's various projects and tapes.

**Aug. 22: Ward I Politics Night:** We have invited candidates for City Council from Ward I to meet with the community and a panel of community representatives who will seek positions on various issues from the candidates. The proceedings will be taped for use in the community prior to the fall elections.

**Aug. 29: Feminist screening:** Women at the Video Center will sponsor the second in a series of sessions to view tapes produced by feminist videomakers. Specifics available soon from Vicki Costello at the Center.

All screenings are free and begin at 8 pm except for the Kids' night, which begins at 7:30 pm.

### ANNOUNCING: Late summer and fall VIDEO WORKSHOPS

At the Washington Community Video Center, 2414 18th Street, NW (462-6700)

#### BEGINNERS CLASSES

Saturday morning, August 17 to Sept. 28. (No class held Labor Day weekend).

Tuesday evening class, beginning August 20 to Sept. 24.

Saturday morning class, Oct. 5 to Nov. 16 (No class held Columbus Day weekend.)

Tuesday evening class starting Oct. 1 through November 5.

#### INTERMEDIATE CLASSES

Monday evening class starts Sept. 9 to October 14.

Monday evening class starts Oct. 21 to November 25.

### ALL CLASSES ARE SIX SESSIONS, THREE HOURS EACH

Evening classes held at 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Saturday classes held 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Payment due by the first class session.



## Wanted: vigilant citizens

(EDITORIAL, from page 1)

In 1974, a period when the economy mitigates against heavy capital investment in cable technology, there are still great pressures at the local level from private businessmen who want cable franchises in order to make money either from selling subscriptions or selling the franchise. It is, like real estate and the stock market, a speculative business for those with a bankroll.

It is often pressure for hasty private development—and with it the spectre of unmet public need—that has energized citizens to become involved in the cable question at the local level.

Frequently these are many of the same citizens who have fought land speculators over unplanned suburban sprawl, who have fought highway interests about the construction of environmentally unsound roads, who have opposed unrestrained development of technology for private profit when this goes unaccompanied by concern for its social effects.

Technology assessment, a new method of decision-making, is discussed elsewhere in CVR. The heart of this process is to involve both technically knowledgeable and technically ignorant individuals in an effort to determine the social, economic and environmental effects of a technology *before it is implemented*.

Such a process is sorely needed in cable television.

The typical pattern does not reflect the technology assessment process. In communities where there is pressure for private profit development, the local government has begun to take an active role in technology development. Much of this appears to be a legitimate response to citizens' demands for a more extensive cable examination: citizens panels, study commissions, community needs surveys, professional consultant studies, and the like.

But just as we have seen in so many zoning and contracts scandals in other areas of urban development, when the local government takes on a role which can ultimately benefit a private party, there is ample opportunity for that role to be abused.

In the old days, an Irving Kahn could bribe a whole local government with impunity. Today, partially because of such blatant scandals, the cable franchising business is much more sophisticated. A politician aligned with speculators has a whole range of "legitimate" activities he can undertake that will ultimately serve private purposes—most of which are difficult to see and harder to prove.

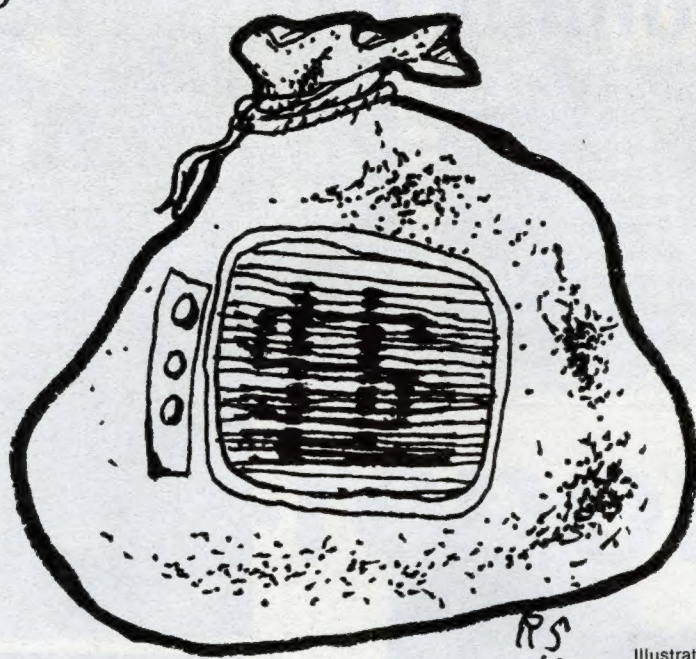


Illustration: Richard Shrader

Where technology assessment would initiate consideration of various development options *before* policy is decided, the politically charged environment of the local franchise scene has all too often resulted in these studies and commissions playing a role in choosing between options that are *already defined*: public v. private development; cable development v. no cable development.

Citizens who would like to broaden the scope of issues being considered are often labeled "anti-cable," in a pejorative manner, just as they were insulted when they raised questions about the sanity of building roads, nuclear reactors, polluting factories and the rest.

The fact is these citizens are usually among the handful in the community who care a whit for cable, other than those who could directly profit from a franchise. They have the difficult task of trying to ascertain and protect the public interests against a cloudy group of fulltime, paid opposing interests.

These cable-activists can no longer rely on the old bugaboo of "outside interests" in trying to reveal cable corruption. Today's slick market demands new and more hidden ownership structures. So a company may be "owned" by a board of local front men, but controlled by financial interests identical in ownership to the big national companies dominating the industry. Even more insidious is the practice of authentic and politically

connected businessmen, lawyers and public figures forming an allegedly local company which is in reality part of a developing chain of interlocking companies. Since there is no national holding company, the connection can only be made through a principal stockholder, who is usually a well-known national cable businessman.

Combine potent local political power with the increasing role of local elected government in defining and influencing the choices in cable development, and you have a field ripe for scandal.

What is surprising is the almost total lack of interest in this field shown by potential political opponents. In the Washington area, for example, where the above examples come from, cable has not become a major political issue, and does not promise to be one in the fall elections.

As one politician with a "clean" record on cable put it: "Nobody really cares about cable here. It's too technical. . ."

Public apathy can only serve to enhance political corruption, as Watergate amply illustrates. But apathy is a fickle force for politicians to rely upon. Under the prod of informed citizens activists demanding real decision-making powers, the public may begin to realize that cable is no more esoteric a subject than the dozens of other technically difficult problems we have faced in this decade.

## Howard County cable getting hot once again

A host of developments have taken place in the once hot cable market in Howard County, as the franchise holder awaits word from the FCC on a certificate of compliance.

Howard Cable Television Associates (HCTA) were awarded the franchise last September, and signed a contract with Howard County officials on Feb. 4, 1974. The franchise award raised considerable uproar in the county, which includes the upper-income new town of Columbia as well as conservative farm areas, because HCTA had not been recommended by the professional consultant hired by the County.

The issue of cable had already been simmering in Columbia for years. When a former franchise holder—Time-Life, Inc.—was disqualified, the County franchise process began. Columbia has no incorporated government, so Howard Co. has jurisdiction there.

After HCTA won the franchise by 3-2 County Council vote, citizens collected some 5,000 names on petitions for a public referendum, which was never held.

Since the contract was signed with HCTA in Feb., however, little public action has taken place.

HCTA filed its certificate of compliance application to the FCC on May 23, although one County source, noting that no copies were sent to the legal office or put on public file, called the action "surreptitious."

One citizens' group—the National Organization for Women—attempted to look at the document, and could not get it at the County level. They filed a motion for an extension for time to file a formal objection to the FCC application, citing as cause their inability to participate in the process.

The County and HCTA members will meet in August to prepare several requests for waivers to the FCC rules which HCTA's application may require.

Several other developments concerning the company have occurred recently:

- Three principal stockholders in HCTA have announced for the County Executive race in the GOP primary, although County officials claim that the local ordinance prohibits officeholders from owning cable stock. Timothy Welsh, HCTA attorney, denies that the law prohibits his clients from holding office, although he admits it would provide a potential conflict of interest. County Attorney Diane Schulte points out, however, that no action on this would be taken until one of the individuals actually won the election.

- Daniels and Associates, the nation's leading cable broker, announced a contract with HCTA that provides for management of the cable TV system. Financing of the system, Welsh claims, will not be provided by Daniels, although he would not say whether financing would be local or not.

- A potential conflict between local and federal regulatory jurisdiction may force HCTA to seek a declaratory judgment in local courts. HCTA, which must begin construction according to a strict schedule mandated in the County's Franchise Ordinance or face daily fines, may not wish to invest funds in con-

struction without FCC certification. This process may take too long for HCTA to be able to meet the local deadlines. Welsh would not acknowledge HCTA's intentions to seek court actions, although he said "We are a model system and we hope to set some precedents nationally. Watch us."

## Metro cable

Rockville cable:

## Ordinance shelved till Sept.

Rockville's City Council has postponed consideration of cable television until fall. A public hearing on an ordinance is tentatively scheduled for September 23, according to Assistant City Manager Daniel Hobbs.

The ordinance was prepared by a member of a local franchise-seeking cable corporation, TelcoR. It was presented last spring prior to the city elections.

Rockville gave written testimony earlier this summer to the Montgomery County Citizens' Committee studying cable. "Regardless of whether Montgomery County lets a private franchise for CATV or opts for a public

system," the testimony said, "Rockville wants control over CATV within its corporate limits."

Rockville is participating in the county-wide study through the Municipal Task Force. Task Force chairman Daniel Hobbs said the task force, which began meeting this June and has representatives of various municipalities in the county, is acting on the assumption that cable tv is inevitable.

That task force is deciding "what needs to be done to protect the cities' interests," said Hobbs. He expects the task force to report by the end of the summer.



# Forces gather favoring cable in Montgomery Co.

By Becky Clary

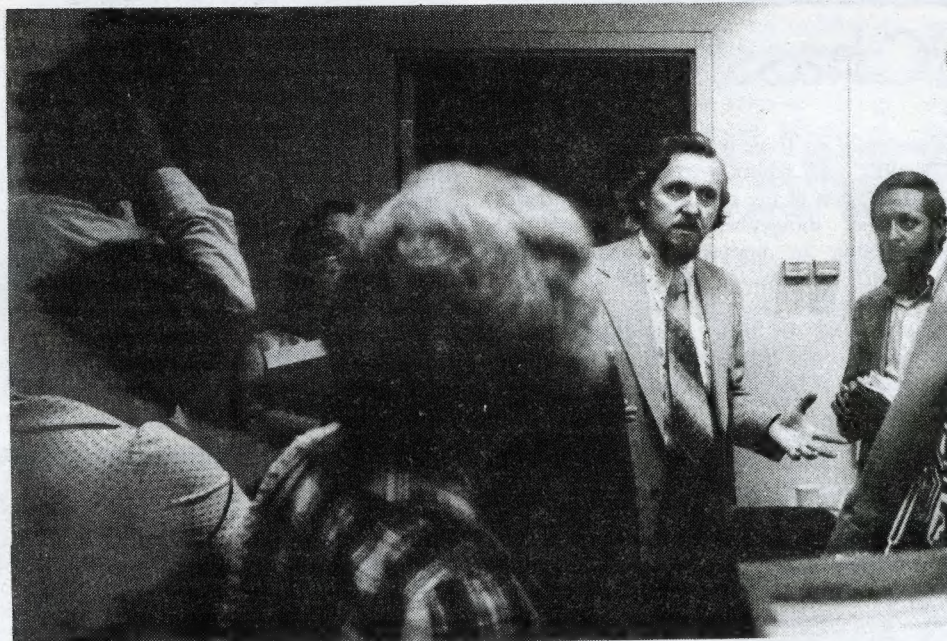
Citizens' groups, a CATV consulting firm, and County Executive James P. Gleason, are making final recommendations for cable television development in Montgomery County, Md., and may well persuade the County Council to pass a cable ordinance before the November county elections.

The Citizens' Advisory Committee to Study Cable TV endorsed "the potential benefits of cable television" at its July 10 meeting.

The 15-member panel also expressed reservations about cable's viability in the nation's richest county. These included the instability of regulatory and market conditions, the county's good reception of 12 off-air signals and the concern whether CATV will, indeed, provide "something above and beyond additional entertainment channels."

Malarkey, Taylor and Associates, the Washington-based cable consulting firm holding a \$52,000 contract to study cable's feasibility, has already drafted an ordinance. The study document is currently before the Citizens' Committee and the County Council.

Recommendations from Malarkey, Taylor, and from several citizen task forces studying



low priority, however, according to some Citizens' Committee members. Hamill's five-person office was established April, 1973. Seven months later a Citizens' Advisory Committee was appointed by the County Council upon Gleason's recommendation. The Council selected a consulting firm at the same time.

"The CATV office is there as staff support," Hamill explains, "to make sure everyone keeps informed." His office acts as a clearinghouse between all the task forces, the County Executive, County Council and consultant, and provides the investigative and evaluative support necessary for the County Executive to reach a decision on cable.

In a county where land development is booming, the rise of another speculative industry, cable TV, creates the question of public interest vs. public rip-off. The Malarkey, Taylor report analyzes options for public ownership. (See accompanying analysis.)

Beyond the issue of ownership is the problem of control, according to Hamill. "Control determines what's going to come into your home." Community access and participation need to be assured, he feels.

The Citizens' Committee's recommendation for private ownership may preclude an exhaustive study of public ownership.

Some citizen task forces were not organized until late this spring. Several have not yet reported to the Citizens Advisory Committee, which plans just one more meeting.

Representatives of Malarkey, Taylor and staff of the County Cable Office as well as representatives of cable corporations regularly attend Citizens Committee meetings. The County CATV office Administrative Assistant is recording secretary for the committee meetings, taking notes and preparing minutes. At the last Citizens' Committee meeting there were at least 10 non-committee cable advocates present.

"I think most people have a vague feeling that cable's a good thing," observed Councilwoman Idamae Garrot. "But I would want to look at any ordinance very carefully."

## Metro Cable

cable's potential in fields like health, education, and commerce, add to pressure on the county to go ahead with cable consideration. "It's now more a question of when than if," says County CATV Study Office Director Russ Hamill.

County Executive James P. Gleason will make his recommendation on cable soon. The County Executive's responsibility is to investigate, evaluate, and recommend cable policy for the county, according to Hamill. The County Council will then pass legislation.

Gleason introduced the cable action plan to the Council in January, 1973. "CATV is a potential resource that could significantly contribute to solutions to critical problems facing each of us..." Gleason wrote in a public Nov., 1972, report announcing his program. His recommendations will probably support county cable development, if past public statements are any indication.

Gleason is running for re-election as the Republican candidate for County Executive.

County Council Chairman William Sher, one of Gleason's opponents for County Executive, says he doubts that cable can become an election issue, however. "I can't imagine anyone becoming terribly excited about it." People are "far more concerned about sludge disposal sites," he adds.

But pressure on the county to act on cable is mounting. At the June 12 public hearing two of the four witnesses represented local franchise-seeking cable companies. One Citizens' Committee member who did not wish to be identified said "there is lobbying to say 'full speed ahead'.... Do it and do it now."

Idamae Garrot, County Councilwoman and one of the Democratic candidates for County Executive declares, "I've never seen any pressure at all." She does feel, however, that "there are people on the (county) council who'd like to make a judgement" on cable.

Citizens' Committee member, Dr. Roald Schrack observed that the county task forces studying cable "weren't told to come up with a critical approach. All they were told was blue sky." (Blue sky is the industry term for cable services which can't or won't be delivered, but are promised in order to win a franchise.)

Chairman of the Municipalities Task Force Daniel Hobbs agrees with Schrack's view. The task force's "mission is to articulate the interests of various local jurisdictions on the issue of cable television," the Assistant City Manager of Rockville says. The self interest of the localities was "predicated on the assumption that cable will come."

According to the Nov. 1972 County Executive's report, Gleason's staff studied cable for a year prior to announcing the action program. As early as February, 1971, the Montgomery County Attorney decided the

county had authority to grant a cable franchise. Two franchise inquiries had already been made at the time.

Among cable groups expressing interest early was Montgomery Cable Communications, Inc. (MCCI), a locally-based company whose membership includes Lee Lovett and former FCC Commissioner Fred Ford, both members of a Washington communications law firm. Influential members of MCCI include a Maryland state senator, a prominent county zoning lawyer and a former candidate for county executive.

Ford/Lovett groups have already been

awarded cable franchises in Arlington and Baltimore counties, through neither has yet received FCC certification. Cable companies in Rockville and Alexandria listing Ford and Lovett among their members are exerting pressure in those communities, too.

County Executive Gleason's five-step program and \$96,000 cable study budget were approved by the County Council February 1973. The study included a public information campaign, establishment of a county CATV Study Office, appointment of citizen task forces and an advisory committee, and selection of a cable consulting firm.

A county study this extensive has "never been done in any other part of the country," says County CATV office director Hamill. "We didn't want someone else defining what's good for Montgomery County."

The study seems to have given citizen input

## CVR analysis in Montgomery Co:

## Questionable industry study pushes cable

By Becky Clary

Can a cable system attract enough subscribers to succeed in a large suburban area with good reception of 12 broadcast channels? This is the question that the Washington cable consulting firm Malarkey, Taylor and Associates try to answer in their second report on cable TV to Montgomery County, Md.

The group's answers are crucial since few statistics are available on urban/suburban cable. Of the top 50 television markets, representing 68 per cent of all households with television, only 7 per cent are wired to receive cable TV. Projections made by Malarkey, Taylor are received eagerly by large communities starved for facts about cable.

But citizens and analysts alike have discovered that predictions made by Malarkey, Taylor, one of the oldest cable consulting firms in the nation, may be more wishful thinking than realistic appraisal. Financial projections, ownership assumptions, and operating boundaries have been questioned by Montgomery County residents as well as by a cable consultant who wishes to remain anonymous.

### Economics: A Credibility Gap

With the prime interest rate pushing 15 per cent, Malarkey, Taylor's figures of 10.5, 9, and 8 seem optimistic. Interest rates are an important factor in any cable assessment, since experienced cable companies are financed about one to one and a half per cent above the prime lending rate.

Although the firm bases its figures on four-year projections made by the Commercial Credit Corporation, government and private economists do not expect the rate to go below 10 per cent again. In fact, a recent series of articles in the *Washington Star* forecasts more inflation, not less.

Malarkey, Taylor's assumption on lending rates for the kind of high risk, capital intensive industry cable is, are probably way too low. Risk increases in urban/suburban systems which experience high construction and operating costs, and a low number of cable subscribers.

If the trend toward private, local cable ownership continues, financing costs may soar above the rates for established cable operators, known as Multiple Systems Operators (MSOs).

Estimated financial success is difficult to determine from the report. While most consultants use the rate of return upon investment as an indicator of potential cable success, Malarkey, Taylor asserts that the debt retirement period—the time it takes to pay back the loan—is the time-honored criteria for determining viability. Unfortunately, the firm does not provide industry standards by which to judge its criteria.

### Success For What

Accepting the firm's own figures, a very limited margin for success is indicated. Only two of the 26 options calculated, appear to be feasible for total county service.

The service itself is also limited. Malarkey, Taylor finds only the single trunk, single feeder cable system economically feasible. Additionally, the analysts propose minimum programming: 12 channels currently received over the air; two imported stations; and automated local origination.

The report does not estimate the penetration or saturation rate—the maximum number of household willing to subscribe to a cable system—from county data. Instead the figure 35 percent was arbitrarily fed into the computer model, and the final statistics flow from that initial guess.

35 per cent comes from "comparable markets with similar existing services...and what they've done in terms of penetration," according to Malarkey, Taylor analyst Joel Goldblatt. It is their "best judgment as to what can be achieved," he adds.

Malarkey, Taylor and Associates' best judgment may not be good enough, although the Boston Consumers' Council reported that "30 per cent after three years of system operation is generally considered...economically viable in most major cities," this is still another judgment. If the model has been allowed to predict the penetration rate from input, the figures may well have been different.

### A Question Mark

The big question is whether or not residents of the nation's richest county will buy cable.

A survey taken by Malarkey, Taylor indicates a high acceptance of cable, despite the good reception of 12 channels over the air. Affluence, and a high number of color sets, may be the determining factors, the report argues.

Affluence may have to be a factor since the seven dollar monthly subscription fee, on which financial projections are based, does not indicate the real cost of cable. Set top converters to receive the larger number of channels are an additional two or three dollars monthly. Pay TV could well up the cost to \$14 a month, as it is in other areas.

TV reception is good in the nation's eighth major television market, however. A cable system offering more of the same may not be that attractive.

The number of subscribers is something no one can predict for sure. But there is no lack of people—county residents, politicians, consulting firms—willing to try.



# Metro cable

## ARTEC faces FCC hassles

The FCC has finally responded to the Arlington County application for a cable television certificate of compliance, and the only surprise was that it took so long for it to do so.

In a June 20 letter to Lee Lovett, counsel for Arlington Telecommunications Corporation (ARTEC), which is the company holding the franchise contract, FCC Cable Bureau Compliance Division Acting Chief Abraham A. Leib listed the items the staff considers in excess of the current federal rules.

During the two years since the FCC cable rules and clarification were passed, the Commission has made it clear that provisions which many observers initially considered to be "minimum standards" are in fact to be considered "maximums," not to be exceeded except when the applicant can show cause why a given provision should be waived.

This matching-up process between the federal regulations and local ordinances has been the cause of the great outcry from municipal officials, as they have seen local laws struck down come time for a cable agreement to receive federal certification.

Arlington's franchise agreement, the first to be completed in the Washington area since the passage of the federal rules, has been identified as a model by many citizens and government authorities, because of extensive provisions for community programming and access. It was widely believed that the FCC ruling on this certificate would set a precedent if it allowed provisions to exceed the federal maximums.

The objections, which fill four pages of dense type, fall into four categories:

- a host of provisions for community access, government use, and educational use of the cable channels, as specified by the County's ordinance and the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity, which is the contract or franchise between the County and ARTEC.
- provisions that requires payment of a license tax on gross receipts of the cable system, as well as other fees;
- a clause which provides that, after the initial ten-year franchise term, the company can have the option to continue for another ten years, subject to approval by the County Board;
- the prohibition by the County for ARTEC to offer any "Pay TV" services without Board approval.

The letter gave ARTEC 30 days to respond to the objections. In each case, the wording suggests that alterations be made in either the ordinance or the franchise agreement.

ARTEC has already submitted a request for an extension to 60 days, according to Lovett. He expects to have a document ready by the end of August for the Commission staff.

"We have three alternatives on each point," Lovett explained. "We can show that the provisions of the ordinance and certificate substantially comply with the Commission rules. We can show that the facts are such that they justify a waiver of the FCC rules. Or we can seek an amendment in the ordinance to satisfy the FCC staff."

In almost every case, says Lovett, the first two alternatives will be sufficient.

"There may be a few things that require changes in the ordinances," he allows.

Such changes may not be forthcoming from the Arlington County Board, however, according to Charles Hammond, head of the County's Public Utilities Commission and the chief spokesman for the local government on cable matters.

"There is no likelihood that the Board will amend the ordinance or certificate to meet FCC requirements," says Hammond. He says that Arlington County went through an exhaustive process to arrive at this policy, and that they intend to stick to that policy. "The FCC rules merely give a guy a chance to make a buck. I don't think that's our primary obligation, unless the operator can meet basic demands for what this community wants from cable."

Indeed, the County feels strongly enough about some of the basic issues that it could

conceivably go to court, if it came to that. "The FCC staff report is an extremely narrow interpretation of the rules," said Hammond. "It comes dangerously close to federal pre-emption in matters of purely local preference." Lovett, too, said that he thought ARTEC would take its case to court if necessary, but he seems considerably more optimistic about the prospects of rapid FCC dismissal of the staff objections. He feels that most of the objections can be met by further explanation. For instance in the area of access channels and provisions, the Commission's concern, according to Lovett, is to make sure a system isn't lying "fallow." Thus, Arlington's requirements, which are considerably more stringent than the FCC rules, would merely need justification on the basis of how ARTEC and the County plan to utilize these channels.

Hammond feels that much of the support materials could have been included in the initial application, but that there will still be a number of items that cannot be resolved with supporting documents. "ARTEC may be treating it too lightly," he said, perhaps this is because ARTEC's president is Lovett's law partner, former FCC chairman Frederick Ford.

There is potential for conflict between ARTEC and the County to respond to the FCC, especially if ARTEC requests County amendments to the ordinance and the County refuses.

"I can't imagine the Board telling the public that there will be no cable in Arlington because they feel they can do a better job of regulating than the federal government," said Lovett.

The County, however, might disagree, according to Hammond. "If ARTEC persists in requiring changes in the ordinance, they're missing the point. It's cable or no cable in Arlington."

Both camps agree, however, that the basis for Arlington's case is that virtually all the requirements being singled out by the FCC were drafted in 1971, before the FCC federal rules were passed.

"It's not like we're Johnny-come-latelies," Hammond points out. "We wrote our ordinance provisions at the same time as New York City. The only difference is that they had an operating system before the 1972 rules and we didn't."

When the response is filed in August the Cable Bureau staff will make a recommendation to the full Commission regarding the Arlington application, including requests for waivers of the rules. ARTEC would then have the opportunity to appeal to the entire Commission, and to the courts, if necessary.

## Baltimore cable office faces \$\$ cuts

The Baltimore City Board of Estimate has scaled down a budget request of the Mayor's Office of Telecommunications, which is directing the city's evaluation of cable television as well as other communications issues.

Telecommunications director Marvin Rimmerman reports that the Board approved an overall operating budget of \$111,000, up from \$80,000 in 1974. That budget, which includes neither a 5½% staff raise nor a capital budget for radio hardware, must cover all aspects of the office's work. Rimmerman had requested another \$80,000, most of which would have gone for cable-related projects.

Unless these funds are restored by the Mayor from discretionary funds, Rimmerman says, the Office will be forced to rely on outside funding for many of its cable projects. Some projects currently underway include:

- an interactive TV demonstration project at the Baltimore City Fair during September, with assistance from the NCTA, Cable Television Information Center, and hardware manufacturers;
- investigation of the 911 national emergency numbers in Baltimore;



Leslie Smith (left) and Dwight Sommers of Arlington hold up their \$4,000 check from Arlington County's Community Initiation for Citizen Improvement, which they will use to start a video access project.

## King Center to undertake video access in Arlington County

Arlington County's first community access project is underway at the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center in south Arlington. The project is receiving its initial support from a \$4,000 grant it was awarded by the County Board through the Board's Citizens' Initiatives for County Improvement (CICI) program.

CICI is a program whereby local, nonprofit organizations can receive grants-in-aid for qualified innovative projects. To qualify, the proposed projects must be important to the particular neighborhood or other section of Arlington, have some lasting value, offer an example that others can follow, and be open and available to all interested persons.

Arlington is scheduled to be cabled and let a franchise to ARTEC in March 1973. However, the FCC has not yet issued a Certificate of Compliance and in fact, in June sent a letter to ARTEC raising a number of objections to the provisions contained in the Arlington agreements [see Metro Cable Round-up].

These objections will further delay the initiation of Arlington's cable service for at least two years. This is not too long, however, to educate and train citizens of the County in the uses and potential of cable and public access, which is the major motivation behind the video access project at the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center.

The project began last fall as the outgrowth of a talk on Cable TV given by Ken Showalter at the request of John Robinson, Director of the Community Center, during a high school career night at Drew School. Several of the students and other community center members met afterwards to discuss cable and

public access. "Hands-on" use of equipment was arranged by Showalter a graduate student in Antioch College's Media Studies program who was also teaching a video course at Drew Elementary School.

The first tape made was a Christmas Gospel Music Concert which had a large audience from Green Valley, as well as from the general Black community in Arlington. This was followed by several tapes made during Black History Week and a rock concert which included "live" feedback to the audience on large monitors.

Thus, the community became aware of "Cable TV". The next step was to get equipment for the community center so that they could do their own "things" without having to rely on borrowed machines a proposal written and submitted to the CICI program, and the grant was awarded in June.

The group has decided to focus on a number of different media in addition to video, partly because of the uncertainty of the cable process. The project participants hope to use still photography, oral history on tape recorders, a newsletter, and possibly film as a catalyst for community awareness and social change, as well as videotape as a training ground for public access.

The major single effort during the coming year will be the production of a documentary on Black history in Arlington County. Other tape will be made—among other subjects—artistic and cultural events, community meetings, lectures, and public information sources. Plans are to begin training workshops on the use of equipment and the potential of cable for any interested Arlingtonians in the fall.

- a possible demonstration project funded by the Department of Commerce on information needs of Baltimore citizens using telephone technologies;

- a training project for the fire department using video cassettes produced by the community college in Baltimore.

Rimmerman emphasized that the Office is focusing on the potential uses of cable television, even while utilizing existing technology, since there is no cable grid in the city, yet.

The Johns Hopkins Metro Center's study of cable economics in Baltimore is nearing completion, according to project director Dr. Catherine Lyall. The final report is due at the Mayor's Office by late August/early September, there, Telecommunications Director Rimmerman will add a commentary before public release, targeted for October.

The \$34,000 study was funded by the National Science Foundation in order to develop a computer model for cable economics in urban areas, using Baltimore as a case study. Since Lyall and five graduate students working on the study were only funded to devote one-fifth of their

time to the project, the results are only partially satisfactory, she said.

The final figures "will provide general economic bounds for cable in Baltimore" said Lyall, and can be used by the city in the franchise process. But the real value of the study is the computer model, which can be used in other urban areas.

Rimmerman added that "the quality of work in the Hopkins study will determine to a large extent the city's focus on cable later this year."

The difference, Lyall said, between the Hopkins-developed model and many currently in use in industry is that Hopkins' input data is "highly disaggregated"—that is, cost figures vary almost block by block. This is much more crucial in urban areas, than in rural cable systems, from which most existing data is drawn.

Hopkins has applied for further funds to continue to refine the computer model and to test the economic impact of the FCC cable rules on the viability of urban cable. Lyall said that she thinks that in many cities like Baltimore the rules act as a deterrent to cable viability, but little data has been developed to prove the contention.



## Reader feedback:

## Telcor's Steers defends record

**Editor's note:** The following is an uncut letter from Rockville cable entrepreneur Edward Steers rebutting Becky Clary's article on CATV in that city (CVR, Vol. 1, No. 4). Since this was the first major response we have printed from a reader, we decided not to edit it, although in the future, we reserve the right to cut for space purposes.

As a principal involved in the question of cable television in Rockville and being both referred to, and quoted in, Mrs. Clary's article "Hub-bub in Rockville," Volume 1, No. 4, I would like to comment on certain statements which appeared in that article and which are either erroneous or misleading.

I do this only for the purpose of hoping to continue a dialogue on an issue of importance to those concerned about CATV, and not to persuade your readers to any particular point of view.

If the basic facts are known, the reader is sure to arrive at his own conclusions from an intelligent position. Only then will the true interests of the community be served and an intelligent position arrived at.

(1) My first point of concern is the reference to telcoR's involvement in the city's election of April 29. TelcoR had meticulously removed itself from any direct participation in the campaign.

I was asked by all five CGG candidates to serve as their campaign manager—a position I respectfully refused for obvious reasons relating to potential conflict of interest. Mr. Francis Gospodarek, CGG candidate for Mayor, visited me personally in my house and asked me to serve in this capacity as did the four council candidates.

As one who has been involved in the Rockville community long before the formation of telcoR, I regretfully, but necessarily felt compelled to advise all shareholders in telcoR that any involvement in the election campaign would compromise the efforts of the corporation to obtain an objective hearing and most important, could compromise the interests of the community at large and the individuals themselves.

Nevertheless, at the insistence of the CGG candidates, one member of telcoR agreed to serve as an assistant campaign manager with the clear understanding of her involvement as a shareholder in telcoR. This proved to be an unfortunate mistake as it was later used against telcoR by some of the very people who sought this individual's involvement.

The candidacy of two individuals, who are telcoR shareholders, for council seats is a moot point as they would be, and indeed are, precluded from any participation in cable proceedings and discussions by law and conscience, as everyone readily acknowledges.

## Calls "groundswell" fallacious

(2) Your article quotes a city official as indicating that there is lack of a "groundswell" for cable in Rockville. The question of "groundswell" is fallacious.

First of all, very few, if any, cable systems since the early days of CATV were developed in response to a "groundswell." A cable operator entering into business must market his service just as any business must sell a product or service to the public.

The debate upon the extent of public acceptance of cable in Rockville can't get beyond theorizing until the specific services to be provided and the facility of a cable company to market those services are included in the debate as the focal point.

It is convenient, in the political sense, to justify inaction by decision makers, on occasion, to lack of a "groundswell." Having been involved in the political life of Rockville for some 10 years, I have never been able to quantify the concept of a "groundswell." Many issues of extreme importance and impact upon our citizens are considered and adopted every year by the decision makers without waiting for a "groundswell."

(3) Citizen testimony at the Public Hearings of July 10, 20 and 30, 1973 (the longest and most heavily attended in city history) were not evenly split as stated in your article.

Some 38 persons representing both individuals and organizations testified, of which 31 urged the Mayor and Council to proceed in a deliberate and careful manner to the establishment of a cable system in Rockville. Five residents opposed establishment of a cable system, while two urged a positive procedure coordinated with Montgomery County.

It is easy for opponents of telcoR and/or cable generally to charge that those favoring cable were under the influence of telcoR. It is totally false, however, to flippantly charge that those advocating cable were either telcoR members or "telcoR-connected," whatever that means.

Of course, the Rockville Chamber of Commerce has telcoR members in it. TelcoR itself is a member of the chamber.

The demonstrated facts, as supported by written and recorded minutes, show that no telcoR member participated in any policy statement arrived at relative to cable TV presented to the Mayor and Council by any organization, commission or individual, except for telcoR's formal presentation.

## TelcoR financial capability defended

(4) Roald Schrack is quoted in your article as saying "They [telcoR] have no money." Citizen Schrack knows nothing of telcoR's financial position or the financial position of any member of telcoR. It is preposterous and irresponsible for him to even speculate as a member of a sitting commission concerned with cable television, on the financial situation and capabilities of a private corporation seeking a cable franchise.

TelcoR has financial capability to completely construct and operate a cable system in Rockville right now and if given the opportunity, we shall detail our financial capability and commitment before the proper authorities with documentation—not through newspapers or private communiques.

It would appear that "Citizen" Schrack seeks to cloud the issue of cable TV by interjecting irrelevant issues. Whether a Rockville system has any relationship to Montgomery County or the greater Council of Government area of D.C. in terms of franchising or profit making or programming or rational conspiracy is totally irrelevant to the question of cable TV and what it means to Rockville citizens.

Yet "Citizen" Schrack is so consumed by local people possibly profiting from a local system, which, by the way, he's convinced will go bankrupt, that he refuses to debate the merits of cable TV.

## Claims TelcoR is locally owned

(5) It is important to note that 84 per cent of telcoR's stock is locally owned. We front for no outside interests.

Our stockholders list was made a matter of public record immediately upon formation of the corporation and all members of telcoR have since continued to be identified. For example, telcoR

members on city commissions have properly disqualified themselves and withdrew from any discussions of cable that has come before their commissions.

Every document prepared by or under the sponsorship of telcoR has been placed upon the public record by being submitted to the Rockville City clerk.

We have sought to make our views known to the Mayor and Council through open and vigorous advocacy of our position. We have constantly been in the forefront of efforts to create public forums.

The "anti cable" lobby breaks down into two groups. One group sincerely believes cable to be a bad thing for Rockville at this time. The other group opposes telcoR as an applicant for reasons ranging from personal animosity toward some members of telcoR, to a belief that a local group operating a cable franchise is not in the best interests of the city.

There are of course combinations of the above motivators for the "anti cable" lobby. Make no mistake, "Citizen" Schrack is a member of the anti-cable lobby.

In contrast to telcoR's open advocacy, "Citizen" Schrack has for the past year been providing anti cable documents to members of the Mayor and Council privately. None of these documents have been placed upon the public record by "Citizen" Schrack, and, therefore, any inaccuracies contained therein cannot be responded to by those including, but certainly not limited to, telcoR, that would like to see cable established in Rockville. Most disturbing is that Mr. Schrack continued his private lobbying even while serving on the Montgomery County Cable Commission.

## Denies private lobbying charge

These facts concerning private lobbying by anti-cable forces belie the anti-cable/anti-telcoR cry of undue influence by pro-cable forces. Again, the facts are that in every key city council vote on cable to date, the anti-cable lobby has prevailed in that the Mayor and Council have consistently voted not to go forward with cable or at the very least to delay. Indeed, to paraphrase Mr. Schrack, as quoted in your article, he is "the pot calling the kettle black," except at this time his "pot" has prevailed.

(6) I cannot close without correcting the impression that the cable ordinance introduced by Councilman Robert S. Bryan in March of 1974 was a copy of Baltimore County's ordinance.

While the franchising application is indeed "nearly identical" (as it is to the Council of Government's, and Arlington's and Ann Arbor, Michigan's and hundreds of other cities), it is in fact taken from the recommendations of the F.C.C., not Baltimore County.

The ordinance, however, is not. It was written by Kenneth W. Gross, a communications attorney, a member of telcoR and a former member of the ad hoc committee on CATV (Rockville).

The origin of the ordinance was clearly identified by Councilman Bryan and Mr. Gross and was an attempt on their part to effectively address the many legitimate concerns of sincere citizens at the previous public hearing in establishing and regulating cable TV in Rockville.

It is my opinion, and that of many others, that the ordinance is highly innovative and carefully designed to both protect the city and its residents and provide for a truly outstanding cable system for Rockville. Rather than argue its merits, however, it is important for impartial analysis of the ordinance to determine its merit.

Most importantly, it was merely introduced—not adopted—to serve as a starting point to gather citizen and professional input to achieve the stated goals of the city and its people relative to cable.

(7) The continued reference in the article to "political implication" is an unfortunate attempt by those who are against cable TV to cloud the relevant issue from the Mayor and Council. The local applicant's position has been to have the question

of cable judged solely on its merits and all applicants judged equally on their proposal and qualifications.

TelcoR's position is no secret. It has been openly advocated on the public record for 18 months. Applicants should be judged solely on their merits and qualifications, and should all things be equal, local ownership and control is more desirable than non-local ownership and control.

It would seem that the "political implications" referred to really center around the involvement of "local" people seeking to win a franchise. I need not remind your readers that local ownership is a criterion followed by the F.C.C. itself in comparative hearings for broadcast licenses.

Local ownership has become a recognized virtue in many endeavors of business, not just cable television. The relevant question to ask should in my opinion, focus on the merits of the application and the qualifications of the applicant, as opposed to the more personal question of the propriety of persons of known community involvement "attempting to do business with the city."

The unfortunate aspect of the situation in Rockville was the accusation that because a local applicant consisted of involved local people, it was improper for them to seek a franchise.

(8) Lastly, telcoR members are not silent on any issue concerning cable, whether it be data transmission, local ownership, franchise fees, or "political implications." We have, and continue to, stand ready to discuss or debate with any one, any time, under damn near any conditions.

Every action we have taken has been on the public record. We have done nothing, said nothing, written nothing, that has not been open and on the public record. Our objective is to get the opponents of cable to do the same.

Edward Steers, Jr., President  
Telecommunications of Rockville, Inc.

**Reporter's reply:** (1) According to information supplied by Mr. Frank Gospodarek, more than one telcoR member participated in the Citizens' for Good Government election campaign. The efforts of CGG members to expel telcoR from CGG after the election show that many did in fact view telcoR's participation in local government as a threat.

(2) CATV is not a high priority for most Rockville residents. Support for CATV is higher in areas where over-air reception is poor, and a groundswell of favorable opinion on CATV does exist in those areas.

(3) Records of the July 10, 20, 30, 1973 hearings reside in Rockville City Hall. According to my rough count, at least 13 witnesses testified against going ahead with cable now. Of the witnesses for cable, Mr. Gross, Mrs. Gross (testifying for B'nai B'rith), Mr. Steers, Mr. Greene, Mr. Ricks, Mr. Ford, and Mr. Shafer (telcoR's cable consultant) were directly tied to telcoR. The influence of telcoR members upon other local civic groups cannot be calculated. Mr. Panagos, an independent cable operator in Gaithersburg, Md., also testified in favor of cable.

(4) Dr. Roald Schrack testified publicly at the July 20, 1973 hearing. Schrack has also written several letters to the Rockville mayor and council, as have telcoR members and private citizens. These letters are in the CATV file in Rockville City Hall.

(5) Rockville's relationship to a county-wide cable system or other Washington area systems listing overlapping directorships, is indeed a relevant issue. "Conspiracy" was never mentioned, but facts about other Ford cable groups in the area were presented. Furthermore, it is essential not to confuse anti-telcoR sentiment with truly anti-cable sentiment: the two are not the same.

(6) It was never stated nor implied that an ordinance was adopted; I regret the error in identifying the franchise application as the ordinance. It is debatable if truly impartial citizen and professional input could be gained one month before city elections.

(7) The point drawn about "political implications" (a phrase used once in the article) is intended to focus attention on the methods of franchise-seeking by local people—use of personal and political influence to obtain a franchise. CVR is not opposed to local franchisees which a community selects by adequately weighing all the facts.

(8) When asked directly about data transmission, Mr. Steers replied, "There's no immediate use for data processing," while Mr. Ricks and Mr. Freeland commented on other cable potential. Since it's predicted that in 10 years 80 per cent of all cable use will be for data transmission, the issue is also relevant.

## Heat gets to DC cable progress

The question of cable television in the District of Columbia is once again simmering as District officials go on vacation.

City Councilwoman Antoinette Ford and her staff aide Tom Parker, who have held primary responsibility for cable within the Council's Economic Development Committee, are both out of town for most of July and August.

A proposal by the CATV Education Task Force, a citizen group attached to the Ford Committee, has been "shopped around" to a handful of funding sources, and is being revised with the assistance of staff members at Cable Communications Resource Center, a minority cable organization in D.C.

The proposal would inaugurate a four-month, citywide community education campaign about cable television, focusing on decentralized hearings in all sections of the city.

A key action which the citizens' group has been seeking is full City Council approval of the proposal and fundraising efforts, which

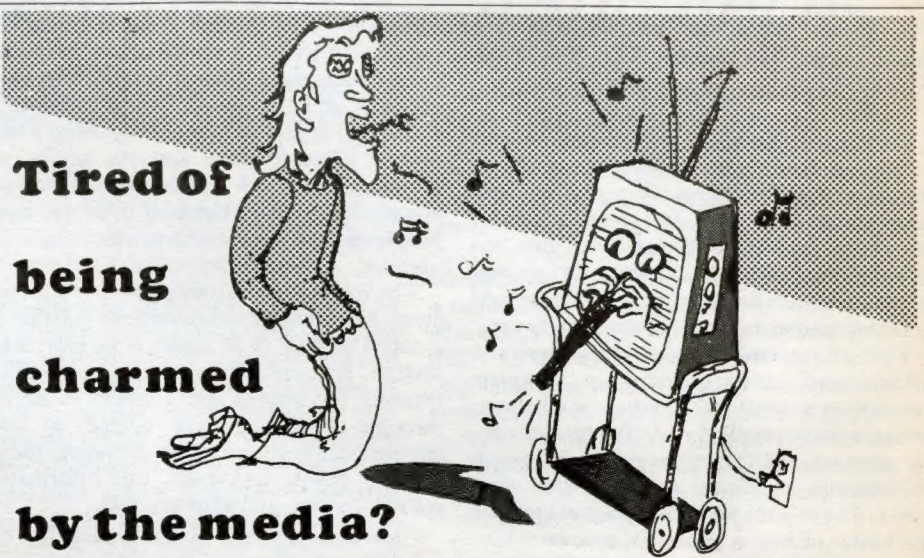
citizens consider necessary if funding sources are to consider the group legitimate in the eyes of city officials.

Ms. Ford, who had previously committed herself to obtaining Council approval, is postponing presentation of the proposal pending final revisions.

City elections, slated for September and November, will mean a shift in Council membership, which could further delay the cable process. Ms. Ford, who has decided against a Council race, will not head the Committee after December.

## CVR correction on Maryland study

CVR reported in the last issue (Vol. 1, No. 4) that the Maryland State Legislature initiated a two-year study of cable this spring. The State Legislature, in fact, passed no such legislation this spring. A Governor's Commission, appointed two years ago, is currently studying cable. No report has yet been released. CVR regrets the error.



It doesn't take an expert to discover that those folks who own and control the media are putting something over on the rest of us. But most people are just too busy to keep up with the media's new tricks that are underway—and their fellow citizens' moves to make the media more open.

**Community Video Report** is a unique publication that tries to keep the general public abreast of the latest developments

Won't you give us your support by subscribing and sending a donation to further our work and help cover our printing costs? The form is on p. 16. Do it now.



# New access reports

"Cable Television: End of A Dream," Network Project notebook #8.

*The Columbus Video Access Center: A Research Evaluation of Audience and Public Attitudes*, by Rolland C. Johnson and Donald E. Agostino, et al. (Bloomington: Institute for Communication Research, Department of Radio-Television. March, 1974. Under contract from Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation).

*Alternative Television: Status, Trends and Issues*, by Neil W. Goldstein (St. Louis: Program in Technology and Human Affairs, Washington University. Rep. # (R)T-74/1 & THA 74/4. May, 1974)

*Opening the Closed Circuit* by Forbes, Tooley, and Cameron (Toronto: Interchurch Broadcasting, 315 Queen St. E. 1974)

*The Public Access Experience: Profiles of Six Centers*, Alternate Media Center, 144 Bleeker St., NY 10012. Second ed.

As public access in the U.S. and Canada begins to develop some sort of trac record, people are finally developing some opinions, analysis and data on the subject. The vast majority of it is available through somewhat esoteric sources. Herein is a look at some of what has passed over our desks in the three months since the last issue.

Network Project's Notebook (#8, Summer 1974) is called "Cable Television: End of A Dream" and sums up the deflation of (perhaps) misplaced idealism many folks entertained for a few years about the SST of communications. The issue reprints the transcript of a radio documentary on cable television produced a part of a series called *Matrix*. The cast features the all-time list of cable heavies, including well-known cable execs, access producers, RAND analysts, critics, federal and city regulators, and others. The second half of the report documents what the Project calls "the failure of public access," based primarily on the New York City experience, and somewhat outdated references to the OTP report on cable.

I found the first part of the notebook interesting, and as a radio show, probably no doubt entertaining. While suitably irate about the treatment of public access by both the government and the large cable companies, the analysis of public access is simply uninformed and outdated. The authors obviously had limited information from which to conclude that access is dead.

This is hardly to say that it is flourishing and may not die a more prolonged death, as another study points out; but access isn't dead yet. The primary problem is building audiences for the new programming source

over cable, providing of course, that funding can be located to create the opportunity for programming. In an exhaustive study of the Columbus, Ind. Video Access Center, a team of Indiana University researchers concluded that VAC's audience is "small, undifferentiated. There is no evidence of a particular group of VAC viewers... (nor) of a particular aspect of VAC programming... which is responding to a clear audience need.... There is no evidence that the audience will grow as present programming develops in quality."

They conclude further that the concept of first-come, first-served access will never build an audience, and recommend that VAC build community support by producing programming (like local news, which doesn't now exist) that has an appeal.

The report, which was prepared by IU's Institute for Communication Research and reads like a thesis, is, nonetheless, an excellent analysis of the problems of access centers in the U.S. (It surveyed 10 cable access projects) and a very detailed look at the viewing habits of cable subscribers in Columbus, along the lines of the Nielsen ratings.

Another report, "Alternative Television: Status, Trends, and Issues," was written as a master's thesis at Washington University, St. Louis, by Neil Goldstein, who has been active in video and cable projects in the city, as well as in cooperation with other video groups.

His scope is much broader than just public access to cable television, although it includes that, too.

His avowed goal is to "bridge the gap between the more formal communications establishment and the eclectic alternative television movement." He tries to define alternative television as a movement and philosophy, as well as to present the methods and problems, (including a look at a handful of prototype projects). He also examines the movements' relationship to both cable and broadcast TV, and makes a series of recommendations, primarily aimed at getting a financial footing for the new kind of programming.

Goldstein's assessment, based on a broader range of material than the other authors, is hardly euphoric about access programming. The difference is perhaps one of tone, bred by participation in a struggling new medium. By the way, Goldstein's bibliography is super.

*Opening the Closed Circuit* puts it this way: "The citizens communication enterprise is a reality in Canada and is growing. However, it is fragile and the factors mitigating against it are powerful. Its demise is not unlikely."

That is one of several conclusions made by an ecumenical church study team that visited 12 localities of all sorts in Canada and

interviewed some 3,000 people about their involvement in cable. This study is readable and filled with anecdotes, case-studies, and detailed looks at how the community channel operates in these cities and towns. With the exception of the final, somewhat generalized chapter on "the future," I found this the most digestible and intelligently organized study of access I've yet seen. Lord save us from the research methodologies, with all due respect. For the point this book makes applies to these studies, too—people must get involved with cable in order for it to work. People must be able to read the studies about it as well.

If this Canadian "study" is readable, Alternate Media Center's *Public Access Experience: Profiles of Six Centers* is downright moving. Page after page of personal testimonials to the process of getting involved in access workshops in 6 cities, mixed with tape descriptions, action photos, press clippings, thank-you notes, do more than any other print presentation I've seen to transmit the kind of enthusiasm and commitment that video/access generates among participants at the community level.

The booklet chronicles the beginnings of six centers established with the cooperation of AMC: Reading, Pa., Bakersfield, Cal., Orlando, Fla., DeKalb-Sycamore, Ill., and two centers in New York City: Village Neighborhood TV and Video Access Center.

While the data is valuable, it is dry. While lists of tapes are interesting, one cannot really know for sure what video looks like from a description. But the stories by people involved in video at these centers are genuinely inspiring.

The book builds a case for access based on humanity, not cost benefits and statistics. As Paul Braun of Reading, Pa. says, "My relatively dull town is full of people, places and events that should be remembered, thus taped. Probably all towns and areas are like that." What better description can you find of why cable access holds out a vision for people?

—Nick DeMartino

THE MONSTER\* is Eating Your Child's Mind

VIOLENCE!  
SEX!  
BUY!  
BUY!  
BUY!  
FRANTIC ACTIVITY!  
CRIME!



BUY, LITTLE CHILDREN!!!

\* THE MONSTER\* is unbridled TV commercialism aimed at our children, fostering unending wants.

WE ARE OPPOSED TO THE MONSTER!  
AREN'T YOU?

A new group has appeared in the children's television battle: Truth in Advertising, Inc., which placed what has to be the funkiest advertisement you ever saw in several East Coast newspapers. Launching an attack against "the monster"—children's TV advertising—TIA joins two highly effective citizens lobbying efforts—Action for Children's Television (ACT) and Council on Children, Media and Merchandising. Write Truth in Advertising, Inc., 133 S. Dorgenois, New Orleans, La. 70119.

## Wisconsin groups plan Midwest video confab

Fliers announcing preliminary plans for a Midwest Community Video Conference and Festival have been distributed to potential participants in an effort to solicit input in the planning.

The fliers, prepared by three sponsoring groups in Wisconsin, solicit participation in a number of issues by people who might attend the conference, including the date, workshop preferences, number of people to attend, and possible use of CATV system in conjunction with the conference.

Sponsors include INPUT: Community Video Center, Milwaukee, and People's Video and University of Wisconsin-Extension, both of Madison.

Dates listed are August 23-25, Sept. 6-8, and Sept. 20-22.

For a questionnaire and further information, write University of Wisconsin, Extension, Department of Communication, 610 Langdon Street, Room 220, Madison, WI 53706.

## Chicago women plan video fest

*Women Doing Video* will be a special program feature of Films by Women/Chicago '74, a two week festival Sept. 3-17 sponsored by the Film Center of the Art Institute with the *Chicago Tribune*. The *Women Doing Video* portion will be Sept. 7 and 14 at the School of the Art Institute.

*Videopolis*, a Chicago based video group is organizing this video presentation. If you are interested in having a tape shown get in touch with: Judy Hoffman, *Videopolis*, 2550 N. Halsted, Chicago, Illinois 60614. Tel. 312/871-1390.

## More newsletters

One hates to be excessive in praise, for fear of lessening the impact, but I would like to emphasize one newsletter which was listed in our earlier round-up (CVR #3).

*Synergy Access*, which is bi-monthly, has provided me with what has to be described as incredible resources in a cross-section of future-oriented fields that defy pigeonholing. A true treasure trove for the generalist. (SA: 606 5th Ave, E. Northport, N.Y. 11731).

*Instructional Technology Report*, published bi-monthly, is the official newsletter of the Information Center on Instructional Technology, part of the Academy for Educational Development. AED is supported by the Agency for International Development, and the copy of the newsletter reflects this international and Establishment orientation. The copy I saw reports on a series of Stanford Research Institute reports by Wilbur Schramm about using various media in developing countries. The March 1974 issue focused on "Video-taping: A Medium for Social Change," and editors are soliciting further materials on this subject. Inquiries: 1414 22nd St., N.W., D.C. 20037. (No price listed).

*Media Report* is a high-priced (\$86/yr.) conservative weekly look at the media. Headed by right-leaning columnist Kevin Phillips and pollster Albert Sindlinger, MR is edited by former #2 man at the Office of Telecommunications Policy, Brian Lamb, Vol. 1, #8 featured analysis of Sen. Barry Goldwater's call to prosecute the *Washington Post* for news leaks and tabulation of attitudes of CBS affiliate stations toward newsmen Roger Mudd and Dan Rather. MR concludes that Rather is gaining on Mudd to replace Cronkite when he retires. (4720 Montgomery Ave., Bethesda, Md. 20814).

*Regular Reports on CATV Apprentices* in Alternate Media Center's 1974 program with 9 cable systems are available. Releases tell of their work: AMC, 144 Bleeker St., New York, NY 10012.

*Film/Video Extra* is a periodic supplement to the Greater London Arts Assn's regular publication. #2 appeared in June filled with video practitioners' opinions about cable and video, case studies of some video projects, reprints from other sources, especially those describing the successful use of video in Canada, and lists of people operating video projects under British Film Inst. grants. (25/31 Tavistock Pl. WC1H 9SF London, England).

## AMC publishes workbook

*The Access Workbook* by the Alternate Media center, 144 Bleeker ST., New York City 10012.

*The Access Workbook* is described as both a "how-to-do-it" and a reference guide to community cable access. It compiles tons of information heretofore not compiled under any one cover. The book is divided into two volumes, both of which are loose leaf so that information may be added or updated, as well as taken out and xeroxed for community use.

The first volume is entitled "Resources and Information" and provides a complete overview as to what public access is all about. Information is supplied on building community support, FCC regulations, equipment purchasing, organizing a project and other topics. The volume features a good chapter on the basics of how a cable TV system works. The information details experience is written by folks who have spent a lot of time doing what they are writing about.

The second volume "The Craft of Half Inch Video" is an equipment and training manual, with emphasis on how to run training workshops.

The training chapters are based on tried and proven methods used at some of the

Alternate Media Centers projects around the country. In terms of the scoop on hardware, the chapters were kind of erratic with some subjects such as sound being covered in detail, and others such as editing being a little sparse. Though these sections might not provide much new information for those already into video, I doubt if there are many people around who would not pick up a few new tips.

The volumes are extremely valuable for any group beginning access to cable or starting up a video project. For those who have been around, it is valuable, as a good orientation resource for interns and trainees to browse through. Purchasers are invited to copy sections to use for no resale purposes, thus if you are giving workshops, this information could be copied and used as a text.

Unfortunately, the volumes sell for the hefty price of \$35, which is a might high, even though they throw in two other books, *Telemedicine* and *The Public Access Experience*. However, at this time it would probably take thirty five dollars worth of separate books to give you the same amount of information. Used to its fullest extent, most readers will find it worth the investment.

—Ray Popkin

*Education U.S.A.*, weekly newsheet of the National School Public Relations Assn., published report on Cable TV movement in its July 1, 1974, issue. (1801 N. Moore, Arlington, Va. 22209).

*Michigan Cables* is a monthly newsletter produced by Mich. State University to cover statewide cable activities. (\$4/yr: 322 Union Bldg, Mich. State Univ., E. Lansing, Mich. 48824).

*Mosaic* is the National Science Foundation's slick quarterly which covers in considerable depth a specific subject. Current issue (Spring, 1974), for instance, is about energy alternatives. \$4.50/year (Supt. of Documents, U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402).

*Blue Sky*, the Rocky Mountain video/cable newsletter, announces their next issue will focus on women's and feminist subjects (P.O. Box 791, 80302).

National Organization for Women's Media Task Force offers a periodic newsletter to keep members and other interested people informed on NOW media activities, including FCC actions, national positions, information on women in media, new literature. Write: Kathy Bonk, 2153 California St., NW, D.C. 20008.

—N.D.

## Video featured at Spokane Expo

Expo '74—the World's Fair being held in Spokane, Washington—will feature a series of communications exhibitions and processes planned by INDEX, a Washington State-based video/information group, which also publishes *Cosmic Mechanix* (CVR #4). Included are the Cybernetic Trade Fair, Global Village Exhibition, Futures Symposium, and a Video Exchange. The group is soliciting lists of tapes in 9 categories for inclusion in the Video Exchange bank. Further info: INDEX, 4111 36th Street SW, Seattle, Wash. 98126. (206) 936-4913.



# Whitehead discusses OTP cable policy

(WHITEHEAD, from page 1)

"I'm not about to blame the press unilaterally for that misinterpretation," he now admits, however. "I think it was a charged atmosphere and that we bear some responsibility for recognizing that and the kind of speech I gave lent itself to some misinterpretation."

In many ways, of course, Whitehead is accurate in describing the Nixon Administration as a friend to Big Broadcasting.

While attacking the networks and other "liberal" media for anti-Nixon bias in programming content, the Administration has used a carrot-and-stick technique on broadcasters with some effectiveness.

Whitehead cites, among several policies which have been favorable to broadcasters:

- support for license-renewal legislation that would extend the period of broadcast licenses and make challenges more difficult;
- support for a "scaling back" of the Fairness Doctrine.

However, the Administration has filed an anti-trust action against the networks; this action is given considerable support in the Whitehead Cable Report, which is favorable to the development of a technology competitive to broadcast TV, and recommends adding new VHF channels to compete with existing channels.

Each policy is the result of a complex of competing political and economic pressures that may not be sorted out without years of hindsight.

Alluding to Watergate, Whitehead said, "A lot of people have to face up to the fact that it is a bit of a myth that this administration has sought to expand governmental controls over the press.... There have been some things that have gone on in this Administration, or things that have been talked about, that you know about as well as everyone else. But I'm not talking about that now. I'm talking about the policy direction."

## Government control expanded?

The key question, he says, is whether "we extend governmental controls over television programming? Do we restrict the growth of outlets of expression, or do we do the opposite?"

"I think the record will show that this office, with the full support of the President, has very diligently and consistently sought to reduce the opportunities for governmental controls over the programming on the electronic media. We have consistently sought to add more voices."

"The facts are that it is the Congress—and the body of those people who we call liberals with a capital L—who relish the thought of government controls over programming."

The growth of regulatory intrusions at the FCC began in 1960, claims Whitehead, when Newton ("Vast Wasteland") Minow and President Kennedy began "to use the legal powers of the federal government to enforce what they thought the country should see on television."

Nixon/Whitehead have acted to reverse this 15-year trend, Whitehead claims, by "dealing with the problem economically, by trying to make the broadcaster be more competitive, to encourage more outlets, so that, to the maximum extent possible, the electronic media can become like the print media."

By his own estimation, action in the cable television field will be the most significant way to do this, although he would include anti-

trust action, regulation, other legislation, the new VHF channel proposal, and public broadcasting as others.

Some observers have noted a visible lack of enthusiasm at the White House for the Whitehead inspired cable proposal, but Whitehead claims that "the President is in agreement with the philosophy of this report. There are, of course, intense political pressures on the future of cable. The broadcasters have an awfully good economic deal now, particularly the networks. The limited number of TV channels now gives them a very protected economic position. No businessman in his right mind welcomes competition," and the intense anti-cable broadcast lobby in the White House and Congress is the result.

While most cable owners give limited support to the report, broadcasters have strongly opposed it as well as the legislation Whitehead's office has sent to OMB for final approval. Except for the major provision that would allow unlimited cross-ownership of cable by other media, the report seeks to advance the fortunes of the cable industry, at the expense of broadcasters.

The report recommends a long-range policy for cable which would take effect at such time when the industry is serving 50% of the nation's TV homes.

Critics feel this is unrealistic, since it ignores cable's political and economic problems of the immediate present.

## Cable grows despite problems

Whitehead argues that "cable is growing despite its problems, at a very steady pace. We now have one TV home in every eight connected to cable.... I think it is realistic to expect that unless the government artificially retards the growth of cable we could very easily have half the homes wired in 10 years."

Philosophically, the report advocates a limited common-carrier approach to cable. "Common-carrier in the 19th Century sense of the word," Whitehead says. "If you set up a carriage for hire, you can't arbitrarily refuse to serve certain people. In that sense, it's common carrier."

One feature of common-carrier structure is a prohibition against the carrier offering favorable terms to one user over another, especially if that user happens to be himself.

Ultimately, this would mean a change of structure for the cable industry. An operator would control only the distribution system, offering channels for lease to users on a first-come, first served basis, instead of functioning as a programmer, too, as he often is now.

The Cable Report and OTP's legislation call this "the separation principle."

The report explains that "even if the cable system owner does not control the content on all channels, he will still have an incentive to restrict access to his system by others if he controls and profits from a significant proportion of the channels, thereby defeating the purpose of the separations principle."

Yet both the report and the legislation allow for exceptions, principally "one or two channels" for the cable operator and a dedicated public access channel.

Asked about the apparent contradiction between these provisions and the separations doctrine, Whitehead claimed that "the Committee could not convince themselves that programming one or two channels was inappropriate. If you said 10% of the channels, it would. But we're talking about cable systems with 50 or more channels." He added that cable industry representatives had presented

## How to get an interview without trying

*It was a typical Washington summer afternoon when I got to the Video Center that Thursday—hot, muggy, with people running around doing a dozen different things. There's always a feeling of diving into chaos head-first when you get into the office late, what with meetings and phone messages and decisions that can't be made without you.*

*So I dialed up Brian Owens, a friend and resident freak at the National Cable Television Association, with a certain amount of fatigue. I clearly wasn't ready for what he was about to ask me.*

*"I got this strange call this morning," he explained, "from a staff guy over at OTP. The best I can make out, they're looking for a video group who would be willing to operate some equipment at a taping session."*

*"Are they paying," I replied. A knee-jerk response when a government agency wants your services. It's amazing how many of them somehow consider themselves community groups when it comes to paying for your services.*

*"No, but it might be fun."*

*It seems that the following day was #2 OTP man Brian Lamb's last. So the staff*

*had cooked up a clever little practical joke, with the complicity of Whitehead: let's get some video people to pretend to interview Lamb, Whitehead and Lamb's replacement John Egar. Then, in mid-stream have Lamb become the target of a hatchet job."*

*"It's their idea of fun," said Brian.*

*So we called OTP staffer Jack Loftus to get it straight from the horse's mouth. It came out about the same, except that we were guaranteed a bona fide interview with Whitehead for our services.*

*Weighing the pros and cons, we decided it couldn't hurt, and it just might be interesting.*

*So we agreed, providing, of course, that it was clear that we weren't liable to become the butt of the joke.*

*The next morning we showed bright and early to plan the strategy with the other plotters, only to be told by Loftus that something "very important" had come up at the last minute and everyone had to work that day. Judging from the trade press, it was probably true, since the PBS compromise was underway at that point.*

*But Whitehead kept his word about the interview. If there's any moral, perhaps it's this: Never believe a smiling bureaucrat.*

—N.D.

many "legitimate" uses for a small number of channels, including an index of programming on other channels, explanations of how to utilize certain cable services, billing information—items which nobody else would have an incentive to carry.

As far as the channel for public access, Whitehead said, "The idea that if a community wants, they can set aside one channel as a kind of public forum, I find that rather unexceptionable, and not particularly threatening."

Recalling a lengthy confrontation/conversation with public-access advocates at the 1973 NCTA convention in Anaheim, he noted, "seeing and talking with some of the people out there refreshed in my mind that it was an important concept.... The idea that by making available an access channel you can encourage innovative use of cable by people who don't have the money or the institutional base to build on is a good point." He compared it with ham operators (he is an ardent such hobbyist), who discovered short-wave.

## Bill axes two access channels

While the bill includes public access, it gave the ax to free municipal and educational access channels.

"Municipal government will have substantial say in terms of the franchise and regulation of cable. As we say out in Kansas, you don't put the fox in charge of the chicken coop."

He had harsher words for those—primarily educators—who "want government to promote certain favored kinds of programming" over cable.

Cable's inherent channel abundance eliminates the need for reserving channels for special use, according to Whitehead. "I think most of the thoughtful people in the educational community have come around to that. They do not want an educational ghetto, which is what two or three or four reserved channels for education would be. They don't want the kind of internecine bureaucratic politics about who's going to get time, who controls channels." He also cites the major cost for cable as the programming, not the channels.

Many educators and others, however, have criticized the report for its lame support for public service uses of cable.

## Seattle group offers video/cable directory

North Community Television Project, a locally oriented video and cable group in Seattle, has just published a *Video Exchange Directory* that lists dozens of groups and individuals working in video, and related areas. Cost: \$1. It is a good model. Available from NCTP, P.O. Box 5364, Seattle, WA. 98105.

Whitehead agrees that "we did not sufficiently address the dimensions of the demonstration program, and the government's role in seeking to explore how public services can be developed and offered over cable as it grows."

The primary reason for this failure, he said, was political opposition within the Cabinet.

Even with public service uses, Whitehead said "anyone who thinks that we can somehow make cable into an intellectual, philosophical Camelot without all the junk we see on television or on the newsstands is just crazy. Cable television is going to do nothing more, nothing less, if we're lucky, than to reflect concerns and needs of the American people. What we have to make sure is that in the process we don't lose some of the very valuable stuff that the marketplace can't support by itself."

That's where the federal role in supporting demonstration projects comes in. OTP is working with HEW, HUD, National Science Foundation and other agencies to iron out proposals to the President that would provide for funds in next year's budget for cable TV.

He said estimates could go as high as \$20 to \$50 million per year for five years, to test the applicability of cable technology in delivery of public services, although "more likely we're talking about \$10 million per year new money per year for five years."

At any rate, Whitehead hopes the bill be sent to the Hill before January, and that cable could be included in the next federal budget. He refused to comment upon whether he will be in his current job that long.

## COMMUNITY VIDEO REPORT

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## Librarians heavy in cable, video

As evidence of the astronomical interest in cable television and video by librarians, delegates to the National Convention of the American Library Association July 7-13 could attend virtually five solid days of communications-oriented sessions, and view their choice of videotapes submitted by 75 libraries from across the nation.

Video and cable workshops, tape viewing, portapak demonstrations, and tours of New York CATV facilities were sponsored by a special task force, which has only been in existence since January, 1973. Since that time library involvement in the field has accel-

ated. The task force was moved this year by ALA delegates from the Social Responsibility Round Table to the Information Science and Automation Division, a move which some participants feared might skew the emphasis away from innovative uses to the technology itself.

Workshops covered a broad range of topics, including video as a social tool, community access and VTR in the library, cable and the arts, research and academic institutional use, library involvement in cable public hearings, and a variety of case-study presentations.



# Coming up at WCVV

## August

- 1: AMO Communications Committee meeting to discuss 1) neighborhood cable system progress, 2) WMAL transfer challenge. 8 p.m.
- 8: Kids night at the Video Center. Starts 7:30 p.m.
- 15: WCVV retrospective on the occasion of our second anniversary. 8 p.m.
- 19: Deadline for September screening session scheduling. Please call earlier, if possible.
- 17: New beginning video workshop begins. 10 a.m. (Saturday) Sign up soon!!
- 20: New beginning video workshop begins at 6:30 p.m. (Tuesday) Register early.
- 22: Ward 1 politics night. Candidates discuss the issues before our cameras.
- 29: Feminist screening, featuring women-produced video. Women only.

## September

- 9: New intermediate video workshop begins 6:30 p.m. (Monday)

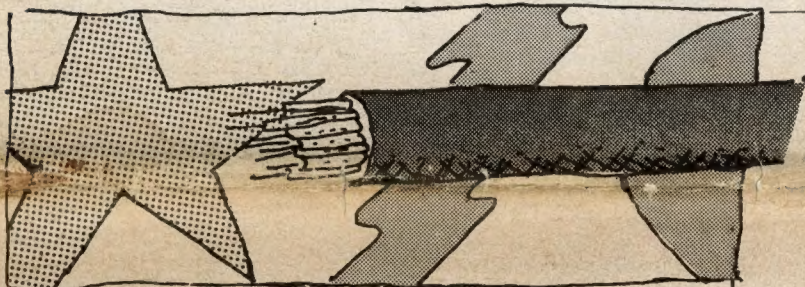
## October

- 1: Deadline for contributions for fall **Community Video Report**
- 1: New beginning video workshop (Tuesday) at 6:30 p.m.
- 5: New beginning video workshop (Saturday) at 10 a.m.
- 25: New intermediate video workshop (Monday) at 6:30 p.m.

**HAVE YOU GOT SUGGESTIONS FOR THURSDAY NIGHT PROGRAMS OR COMMUNITY PROJECTS?** Call us quickly so we can plan for September or October booking. 462-6700.



As activities at the Washington Community Video Center have expanded, so has the need for space. In June we moved into the other half of the storefront which had been sublet by the Daily Rag community newspaper (above). When the remodeling is finished, we will have a larger video screening space—including a film projection booth—and more working space. Meanwhile, our old office (right) will remain the same, although the area which had been used for screening will now be a video studio. Community groups wishing to use the video-space for programs (see schedule at left) should contact staff members at 462-6700.



## Yes, friends, there's a communications movement.....and you're part of it!

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